# Encyclopaedia of Indian History

ANCIENT • MEDIEVAL • MODERN

# ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIAN HISTORY

## ANCIENT • MEDIEVAL • MODERN

### (VOLUME III)

*by*

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**A.P.H. PUBLISHING CORPORATION**
5, ANSARI ROAD, DARYA GANJ
NEW DELHI - 110 002

*Published by*
**S B Nangia**
**A P H Publishing Corporation**
5, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj
New Delhi-110 002
☎ 3274050

**ISBN 81-7648-070-3 (for Set)**
**ISBN 81-7648-073-8 (for Vol. III)**

1999



*Typeset at*
**NEW APCON**
25/2, Panchsheel Shopping Centre
New Delhi 110 017
☎ 6494336
6490802

*Printed in India at*
**Efficient Offset Printers**
New Delhi-110 035

# Preface

The four-volume publication *Encyclopaedia of Indian History* has caught the imagination of the readers The growing popularity of these books among the post-graduate students and researches in the history of India is evidenced by the ever increasing correspondence of the editor with them as also by the challenge of press review from scholars from various parts of the country The editor highly appreciate comments on and critical evaluation of this books by those interested in the subject, he always bears in mind their valuable suggestion for qualitative improvement of the material wherever necessary

We are passing through a very serious socio-cultural and national crisis today The rising tide of fundamentalism, regional and parochial outlook, and the racial and linguistic controversies threaten the very fabric of composite Indian culture and the concept of secular nation-state, evolved laboriously by one of our ancestors—Akbar, The Great, and so fondly cherished by the modern Indian leadership This book does not have a direct bearing on all these aspects, nevertheless, it may provide, in historical perspective, an insight into the causes and remedies of some of these problems to the readers

A brief resume on the survey of sources, which

precedes the text in all of the four volumes of this study by way of an introduction, may give an idea to the scholars of history, particularly the subject-specialists, of the deep involvement of the author in the field of his study and research As a matter of fact, it reveals but a tip of the iceberg of the source-material on Indian history which the editor has built over the last twenty-five years

*Editor*

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# Robert Clive and His Career

Robert Clive was born in 1725 From his very childhood he was a troublesome chap, difficult to be controlled and very emotional While at school he picked up quarrels with shopkeepers and organised his gangs to create trouble everywhere His father was fed up with him and he got him job in the East India Company in 1743 So he reached Madras in 1744 as writer (clerk) Here he found no charm and began to feel sick of life He tried to commit suicide by shooting himself but remained unsuccessful He came to the conclusion that God wanted him to survive to do great things perhaps So he began to take interest in life He left off his civilian job and jointed the army In 1746 he was taken as a war prisoner by the French when Duplex captured Madras He was released in 1748 as a result of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle He now began to act as a zealous soldier of the British army

*Clive and the second Carnatic war* His role in the Second Carnatic War brought him into limelight as also it proved a turning point in his life The English has suffered many a reverse at the hands of the French The French had established their influence at Hyderabad by placing Salabat Jang on the throne Bussy was there to maintain this influence Chanda Sahib, supported by the French, had laid siege to Trichinopoly where Mohammad Ali, the friend of the English had taken refuge Clive suggested to Saunders

to attack Arcot, the Capital of Karnatic, to divert the attention of Chanda Sahib He, at the head of a force 500 strong led an attack on Arcot and captured it His proposal had the desired effect Chanda Sahib sent half of his army to Arcot under his son Raja Sahib who was defeated Then Clive routed the army besieging Trichinopoly, too This exploit enhanced the reputation of Clive He after winning these laurels went back to England in 1753 but came back to India in 1758 as the governor of Fort Saint David

*His victory at Plassey, 1757.* Nawab Siraj-ud-daulla, the successor of Alivardi Khan was enraged at the objectionable activities of the English in Bengal and captured their settlement at Qasim Bazar and Calcutta in 1756 The English authorities at Madras sent a force under the command of Admiral Watson and Robert Clive They recaptured Calcutta forced Siraj-ud-daulla to sign a treaty which was very advantageous for the English

Clive then hatched a conspiracy against the Nawab in complicity with Mir Jafar, his commander-in-chief, and Amin Chand a Bengali rich man in 1757 He thus defeated Siraj Plassey in 1757 and placed Mir Jafar on the *gaddi* of Bengal Thus Clive got the virtual mastery of Bengal His victory at Plassey laid the foundations of the English dominion in India He was the first English Commander to strike openly at a native power

**Clive as Governor of Bengal, 1758-70**

The Battle of Plassey had made the new Nawab a mere puppet in the hands of the British Clive's reputation was at the highest pitch The council of Calcutta elected him the Governor of Bengal He held this office till February 1760 In the period of about two years he made remarkable achievements which can be described as below

*Monopoly of Saltpeter trade* Mir Jafar, though his position had changed theoretically, was in great difficulty He was weak and incompetent and the resources of the state were very scanty and exhausted The conspirators who had helped a lot in making him the Nawab blamed him for not serving their interests Besides, he tired to crush the Hindu officer like Durlabh Ram and Raja Ram Narayan of Bihar Clive, however, intervened and pacified these two Hindu officials As a reward of his intervention Clive got the monopoly of Saltpeter trade in Bihar for his nation

*Defeat of Emperor Shah Alam II* Shah Alam II who was driven out by his vazir Imad-ud-mulk-turned his attention towards Bengal Mohammad Quli Khan the *faujdar* of Allahabad helped him and he planned to lay siege to Patna Mir Jafar invoked the help of the English and Clive at once marched with an army Shah Alam was defeated and forced to leave Bihar Though he attempted twice again to occupy Bengal, but in vain According to Prof Sarkar

> "All his hopes of independence crushed, and in utter penury and lack of supporters, the sovereign of Delhi Empire now sued for the mercy of the English "

Clive got the title of *Omarh* from the emperor Though at first he was anxious to get a *jagir* also to make a personal fortune, yet he proved too wise to stoop to this utter selfishness

*Defeat of the Dutch* Mir Jafar was chafing under the domination of the British The Dutch had their settlements at Chinsura, Qasim Bazar and Patna in Bihar They felt unnerved under the new political order Though before the battle of Plassey they had remained neutral, yet now they felt jealous of the British ascendancy They resolved to strike at the

English Some historians believe that Mir Jafar was secretly encouraging the Dutch, but it does not seem true

> "The Dutch were in fact in the same position in Bengal now, as the English would have been in South India, had Saunders done nothing to counteract the schemes of Duplex"

In 1759 the Dutch Vessels with about 900 soldiers appeared in the Ganges The English met them at Bedara and the Dutch suffered a defeat They had to withdraw This victory of the English was another feather in Clive's cap and marks an advancement, in the rise of the British power in Bengal

*Capture of Northern Circars* The Third Carnatic War broke out with vigour in 1758 after the arrival of Lally in India He made the mistake of calling Bussy from Hyderabad Busy obeyed but unwillingly Clive was already waiting for this golden chance As soon as Bussy left Hyderabad in 1759, Clive, despatched Col Forde to seize the northern Circars Thus the English came to possess these Circars without much difficulty This ended the french influence at the Court of Hyderabad and the English gained a firm ground which contributed a lot to the final overthrow of the French and the ultimate success of the English

Thus we see that Clive established and maintained the supremacy of the English in Bengal by his personality and character He bagged so many successes and advantage for the English East India Company that it gained a firm control over the *subah* of Bengal, though it mad no formal right or privilege to this effect The achievements of Clive in these three years (1757-1760) were many and varied and of utmost importance He was the first European to gain an open victory over the Indian ruler of Bengal He got for the

British the monopoly of Saltpeter trade, thwarted the designs of Shah Alam II and checkmated the Dutch. Moreover, he put an end to the French influence all Hyderabad and strengthened the position of the English. All these achievements served as the base of the British Empire in India. The momentous and the most enduring effective achievements that justify his claim to be considered as the real founder of the British Empire in India.

The Battle of Buxar that was fought in his absence in 1764 and which made the East India Company as sovereign power in India was nothing but a repetition of the revolution that had been brought about in 1757. Clive left India in February 1760 after making the most significant and lasting achievements during the last three years.

**The Battle of Buxar (1764)**

It has already been stated that Mir Jafar was feeling restless under the British Control. The treasury was empty and the payments of the troops were in arrears. He Company. Clive left for England in May 1760. Soon after died Miran the son of Mir Jafar, and the question of succession added to the dissatisfaction of the Company. The invasions of Shah Alam in 1760 and 1761 and the incursions of the Marathas alarmed the Nawab. Thus because of the weakness and inefficiency of the nawab his *subah* was in a state of utter anarchy and misery.

Mr. Holwell levelled certain charges against Mir Jafar with a view to effecting a change in the Nawabship. The Company entered into a treaty with Mir Qasim Ali Khan who had been sent by the Nawab to Calcutta on a state business. Mir Qasim, the son-in-law of Mir Jafar agreed to pay off all the dues of the Company and to cede the districts of Burdwan,

Midnapur and Chittagong to the Company The Company in return, offered to make him the Nawab of Bengal

Caillaud and Vansittart proceeded to Murshidabad to implement the treaty, but Mir Jafar refused to act upto it Caillaud was order ordered to capture the palace and the helpless Nawab abdicated the throne for his son-in-law He began to live at Calcutta as a pensioner Mir Qasim assumed Nawabship without any bloodshed This is known as the *Second Revolution of Bengal* But Mir Qasim could not pull well with the English for long and a war among them became inevitable

1 *Mir Qasim's strong character* Mir Qasim was man of strong and able character He had been the faujdar of Purniah and Rangpur and thus possessed an administrative experience As soon as he assumed the throne, he realised the necessity of a rich treasury and efficient military force He was indeed the most efficiently and ablest of all the Nawabs of Bengal after 1756 He suppressed the Zamindars and compelled the officers of his province to refund to the State all the misappropriated money He got his forces trained after the modern lines and established factories for the money He got his forces trained after the modern lines and established factories for the manufacture of guns at Monghyr whereto he had, shifted his capital from Murshidabad Though all these measures were praise worthy for an efficient ruler, yet the Company could never like these activities which were sure to defy its control over the province

2 *Murder of Ram Narayan* Clive had been backing Ram Narayan, the deputy governor of Bihar, but Vansittart did not support him He, on the other hand, supported the policy of the Nawab So he handed Ram

Narayan over to Mir Qasim who after stripping him of all his wealth put him to death With the murder Mir Qasim's internal troubles came to an end and he felt strong enough to chastise the English for their objectionable activities and oppression

3 *Misuse of Destaks* It has already been stated that the English enjoyed the right of the free trade by the imperial fireman of 1716-17 But the servants of the company always misused this privilege for their personal benefits and caused harm to the revenues of the Nawab, the native merchants and the manufacturers

> "A trade was carried on without payment of duties, in the prosecution of which infinite oppressions were committed English agents and Gomasthas, not contented with injuring the people, trampled on the authority of government, binding and punishing the Nawab's officers wherever they presumed to interfere "

This was sure to provoke Mir Qasim's wrath who was always anxious to rule evenly Attempts of the Nawab to settle this trouble in a cordial manner met with a hostile behavior on the part of the Company

4 *Nawab's anxiety to be Independent.* It is a singular fact that the Nawab, who had cleared all the dues of the Company, secured his position against internal troubles and took serious objection to the aggravating activities of the English He claimed to be an independent ruler But the activities of the Calcutta authorities were quite incompatible with his position So a conflict between the two became inevitable

5 *Abolition of duties.* Mir Qasim protested against the practice of the Company servants Vansittart met Mir Qasim at Monghyr in 1762 and concluded a treaty

with him, but the Council at Calcutta rejected this treaty The Nawab, thereupon abolished all the duties and thus brought all the merchants-European or native-on equal footing

The English unjustly demanded a distinct behaviour which Mir Qasim could not comply with Though Vanisttart and Hastings were having their sympathies with the Nawab, all the other members asked for the re-imposition of duties as before Hence a war became quite unavoidable

*Patna Incident 1763* Mr Ellis, the chief of the English factory at Patna became violent He in order to make a show of his assertion of the prerogative of the English tried to seize the city of Patna, but the Nawab reached in time and the garrison was destroyed

> "Ellis seems deliberately to have aimed at war, in order that the obstacles to the private traffic of himself and his friends might be removed "

*Battle of Buxar, 1764* Major Adams now marched against the Nawab with a force 5100 strong, while the Nawab's forces were 15000 strong Unfortunately he suffered successive defeats at Katwah, Murshidabad, Giria, Ooty, Udaynala and Monghyr Then the Nawab fled to Patna and massacred all the English prisoners and Indian officials who were suspected to complicity with the English He then ran to Oudh and formed an alliance with Nawab Shuja-ud-daulla and Emperor Shah Alam But the combined forces of Bengal and Oudh were defeated by Major Munroe at Buxar in October 1764 Mir Qasim fled away and died in 1777 near Delhi in a state of abject poverty

Though Shah Alam went over the side of the English, Shuja-ud-daulla carried on the struggle till he was decisively defeated at Kara in 1765

"Thus ended the famous battle of Buxar, on which depended the fate of India, and which was as gallantly disputed as was important in its results "

**Comparison of the two battles**

Which of the battles of Plassey and Buxar was more important in its consequences, is a point largely controversial Some historians attribute more importance to the battle of Plassey and deem it to be the real origin of the British dominion of India, but others are of the view that it was the battle of Buxar that laid the foundations of the British empire in this land of ours Thus it has become usual to discuss the comparative importance of these two battles A comparative glance on the causes, events, nature and importance of the two battles will clarify the point

*Causes.* As far the causes of these two battles are concerned, in both the cases, the English were responsible for the commencement of hostilities They had their eyes on the rich province of Bengal In the case of Plassey they helped the rivals of Siraj-ud-daulla, gave shelter to Krishan Ballabh and raised fortifications in defiance of the order of the Nawabs Moreover, they misused the *dastaks* In the case of Buxar, too, they impeded the Nawab in his management of the *subah* and abused the *dastaks* The respective Nawabs took the English activities very ill and the hostilities broke out

*Events* But there is a great contrast between the nature of the events of both the battles Where Plassey involves a great treachery, Buxar was a hard fought battle Plassey was an ordinary skirmish but Buxar was a decisive battle The casualties on the side of the English were only 23 with 49 wounded in the battle of Plassey but they lost 847 soldiers in the battle of

Buxar The Battle of Plassey was fought agaınst the Nawab of Bengal alone, but at Buxar an allıance of Bengal, Oudh and the Mughal emperor had to be faced In the battle of Plassey the Englısh has to fight agaınst a typıcally Indıan army but at Buxar they had to face an Indıan army traıned on western lınes

The success of the Englısh ın the battle of Plassey can be safety attrıbuted to a polıtıcal conspıracy and to no faır fight, but the defeat of Mır Qasım was the result of a straıght fight between two rıvals eıther to whom was aware of the consequences Mır Qasım knew that hıs strong and forward polıcy was sure to brıng hım ınto a conflıct wıth the Englısh Where the defeat of Sıraȷ-ud-daulla was the result of an unexpected treachery of hıs general Mır Jafar and other, the defeats of Mır Qasım were certaınly due to the ınherent weakness of hıs army Moreover, the defeat of Mır Qasım made the Englısh the conquerors of Bengal ın much more a real sense than dıd theır success at Plassey

Yet ıt cannot be denıed that ıt was at the battle of Plassey that the Englısh got a firm footıng ın Bengal Thıs footıng was, however, utılısed to succeed ın theır final encounter wıth Mır Qasım If there had been no battle of Plassey culmınatıng ın the success of the Englısh, there would have been no Buxar at all Where Plassey paved the way for Buxar, Buxar completed the work begum at Plassey

Buxar was certaınly a sequel to Plassey There ıs nc denyıng the fact that Plassey ıs one of the most ımportant battles ın the world hıstory Its polıtıcal sıgnıficance ıs very great and some people consıder ıt to be orıgın of the Brıtısh domınıon ın Indıa, yet the fact remaıns that the success ın thıs battle dıd not gıve the Englısh the mastery of Bengal Though by

replacing Siraj by Mir Jafar, the East India Company became the *de facto* master of Bengal, yet it was left for the battle of Buxar to make the position of the company *de jure*, because at Buxar it came to control Bengal by the right of conquest

Moreover, Plassey enabled the English to enhanced their prestige in Bengal only Buxar not only made them complete masters of Bengal, but paved the way for their control over Oudh Where after Plassey the English could make a puppet Nawab sit on the throne, Buxar did something more The Company got the right of appointing the Nawab's officials and Nand Kumar a bitter opponent of the company was removed from the power, which completed the establishment of the English influence Every power passed into the hands of the Company In other words

> "The battle of Buxar made the East India Company a sovereign power in India"

So it may be concluded that as it was Akbar not Babar, who is considered to be the real founder of Mughal rule in India, it was Buxar not Plassey that made the British masters of the situation in Bengal Ramsay Muir remarks

> "It (Buxar) finally rivetted the shackles of the Company's rule upon Bengal It announced not only the defeat of the Nawab of Bengal but that of the Emperor as well as of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh The Empire passed into the hands of the Company and Oudh lay at its feet"

Sir James Stephen has rightly summed up the comparative importance of these two battle by saying that

> "Buxar deserves far more than Plassey to be considered as the origin of the British power in India"

**The Second Governorship of Lord Clive, 1765-67**

"On the whole it may be said that Clive's second command was not less important for reform than his first had been for conquest"

Clive returned to England in 1760 After his departure significant changes had taken place in Bengal Mir Jafar was replaced by Mir Qasim who fell quite short of the expectations of the Company So he was defeated by Major Hector Munroe at Buxar in 1764 and Mir Jafar was again installed on the throne He died in 1755 and his son Najam-ud-daulla was placed on the *gaddi* He was a puppet in the hands of the British and the servants of the Company were now busy making personal fortunes Thus the state of affairs in India was quite disturbed and distracted This invited the anxiety and intention of the authorities in London who, with a view to restoring order, sent Lord Clive back to India as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bengal He was given wide powers so much so that he could form a committee of his own choice to work under him if the existing council did not satisfy him

When Clive reached India in May, 1765 after an absence of five years, the state of affairs in Bengal was miserable The company servants committed various excesses and oppressions in commercial as well as administrative sphere Clive himself described the wretched condition of the *subah* as below

> "I shall only say that such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery, corruption and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal, nor such as so many fortunes acquired in so unjust and rapacious a manner"

So Clive had a difficult task to accomplish He wanted to reform all corruption and dissuade the

private commercial engagements of the servants of the Company, thought he was much more interested in preserving "the Company's political ascendancy by playing upon the weakness of the Nawab and his subjects " Nevertheless, he made significant reforms which can be described as below

**Reforms of Clive**

*Civil Reforms* clive introduced several civil reforms with a view to cleaning the administrative system and putting an end to corruption The present and extortions that the company's servants accepted were no less than bribes The private trade carried on by the English officials caused loss to the Company Moreover the salaries of the servants were very low and it was a potent caused of corruption So Clive sought measures to remedy these practices as below

1 He forced the servants of the Company to sign covenants by which they were bound not to accept gift, though it is hard to believe that mere signing of covenants checked this malpractice

2 Clive ordered the Company's men not to carry on private trade as it was extremely harmful to the revenues of the Nawab and that of the Company also

3 Clive earnestly felt that the low salaries forced the company's servants to stoop to corruption So he wrote to the home authorities for a rise in the salaries, but the sanction could not be obtained So he formed a society and gave it the monopoly of the trade of salt, tobacco and betel-nuts The profits of the society began to be distributed among the senior servants of the Company, through the juniors were prohibited to indulge in it The society proved an instrument of oppression and was abolished in 1767

Though the civil employees opposed these reforms tooth and nail Yet Clive proved too strong to yield to this strenuous opposition

*Military reforms* The victory at Buxar expanded the British territory The incursions of the Marathas were always feared Moreover, a practice of extra allowance (bhatta) was going on in peace time also It was started in Carnatic during the Carnatic Wars when it was to be paid by Mohammad Ali In Bengal it had come into force since the days of the Battle of Plassey Previously it was paid by the Nawab of Bengal but now it was a burden on the Company because the Diwan had come under the Company So Clive took the following measures to reform the army

1 He divided the Company's troops into three brigades Each brigade had one regiments of European infantry, one company of artillery, one troop of cavalry and six battalions of sepoys One brigade was stationed at Monghyr, the second at Bankipur and the third at Allahabad

2 Clive abolished the system of bhatta in peace time though it was to be paid if the forces were in the field

This reform led to a rising under the leadership of Sir Robert Fletcher but clive handled it with a firm hand He sent the ring leader back to England and accepted the resignations of other New men were brought from other presidencies to take their place

**Settlements with Oudh & Shah Alam**

*Oudh* The settlement effected by Clive with the Nawab of Oudh was very important Instead of making the Nawab Shujah-ud-daullah of Oudh an enemy of the Company, Clive made Oudh a buffer state between the British and the Marathas as well as the emperor

It secured the position of the English in Bengal After the battle of Buxar, Oudh lay at the feet of the Company Though some members of the council suggested the annexation of Oudh, yet Clive was opposed to it He knew that this rapid expansion of Company's territories would make the task of protection and administration more complicated The geographical condition of Oudh was very strategic So a treaty was signed with the Nawab at Allahabad in 1765 which as known as the Treaty of Allahabad and the terms whereof were as below

1 Nawab Shujah-ud-daulla was given his state back except the districts of Kara and Allahabad

2 The Nawab had to pay fifty lakhs as war indemnity

3 The English agreed to help the Nawab with troops provided he bore the expenses

4 The zamindari of Benaras and Ghazipur was given to Raja Balwant Singh who had sought the protection of the English

5 An offensive and defensive alliance was concluded between the two parties

6 The company got the right of duty-free trade throughout the dominion of the Nawab

Thus Oudh became practically dependent on the English The English now kept a close alliance with Oudh to use it as a buffer state The settlement made by Clive resulted in the annexation of Oudh by Dalhoousie in 1856 Clive did not annex Oudh for the following reason

a The Directors of the Company were against the policy of acquiring territories

b The expansion of territory will divert the Company' attention from its commercial aim,

c It required surplus revenues

d It was sure to rouse the jealousy of the rival European power in India

e This would bring the Company's dominion in direct touch with the Maratha territories

f The Company lacked efficient administrators

*Shah Alam* Emperor Shah Alam was a fugitive who after the battle of Buxar threw himself at the mercy of the English He, however, was yearning for his restoration to the throne of his forefathers Clive encouraged him and offered him the districts of Kara and Allahabad as also a pension of 26 lakhs a year In return the emperor had to

1 grant the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the Company

2 grant the cession of Northern Circars

These grants were formal as the subah of Bengal and Carnatic were virtually independent of the Mughal authority, yet these grants made the possessions of these territories by the company quite legal The grant of the Diwani of Bengal proved very significant as it authorised the Company to collect the revenues and defray the government expenses of the subah The Nawab's position became almost zero He had already transferred the military powers to the Company by a treaty after Buxar With the transfer of the Diwani powers he had nothing left with him

Thus this settlement with the emperor Shah Alam changed the English East India Company from a "trading body to a ruling power and made it the sovereign of a rich and potent kingdom "

***Dual system in Bengal, 1765-72***

The Company has secured the grant of the Diwani power of the subah of Bengal It gained complete control over the revenues and became responsible for civil justice It had taken the military powers also from the Nawab before the arrival of Clive against a fixed amount of 53 lakhs annually, yet Clive forgot that it was not possible for the Company to shoulder the burden of administration So he decided to shrink back from this responsibility and introduced a dual system of government in Bengal in 1765

The company collected the revenues, but the administration remained in the hands of the government of the Nawab who was paid a fixed annual sum to meet the expenses of administration As the Nawab was a minor yet, two Deputy-Governors were appointed by the Company to carry on the task of the government, Mohammad Raza Khan was made the Deputy-Governor (Naib) of Bengal and Shitab Rai that of Bihar Thus the real power passed into the hands of the Company but the dyarchy or dual system served to hide this fact Clive himself said

> "Since the acquisition of the Dewani, the power formerly belonging to the Subah (Nawab) of these provinces is totally, in fact, vested in the East India Company Nothing remains to him by the name and shadow of authority This name, however, this shadow, it is indispensably necessary we should seem to venerate "

There were sound reasons which led to this system of dual governments

a The Directors of the Company were unwilling to assume the responsibility of administration as it was sure to consume the profits

b There was a great possibility of the jealousy of other European powers being roused This dyarchy served to conceal this political change

c The Company lacked administrators who could be entrusted with the task of administration

This dyarchy could not prove effective Power and responsibility came in two different hands The company bagged all power while the responsibilities of the government were left with the Nawab He, being a minor, the Deputy-Governors were made all in all These Deputies could not check the oppression of the Company's servants Let alone the remedy of the abuses already prevalent, this system gave rise to greater evils and till the arrival of Warren Hasting, the next governor general, the subah of Bengal groaned under the burden of corruption, oppression and injustice Private trade increased enormously The peasants were oppressed by the revenue officers and misery prevailed everywhere

The Company, too, gained little by this system, as the agents who collected the revenues misappropriated a good deal of the money Even the appointment of supervisors failed to improve the situation because the supervisor got indulged in private trade In short, according to Kaye

> "This dual administration made confusion more confounded and corruption more corrupt"

Thus we see that the system of dual government proved an utter failure and it had to be ended as soon as the next Governor-General reached India

Clive, after laying the foundations of the Company's empire in India, left for England in 1767 Though at first he was given great honour and admiration for his work done in India, yet his end was

tragic He was charged with corrupting the political life of England by his ill-gotten money in India In 1773 three charges were revelled against him One of these charges aimed at his abuse of authority and acceptance of bribes as Governor of Bengal Clive defended his case strongly but the attacks on his personal character humbled him to shame He was immensely grieved and in distress committed suicide in 1774

**Treaty of Allahabad**

The treaty of Allahabad was a master stroke of Clive's policy He came to India in 1765 as the Governor of Bengal In his absence, the battle of Buxar was fought in 1764 and Nawab Shujah-ud-daulla and emperor Shah Alam II were defeated as allies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of the Bengal Mir Qasim fled away leaving his Subah in the hands of the English and the emperor threw himself at the mercy of the English Clive concluded a treaty with Shujah-ud-daulla and the Emperor in August 1765 at Allahabad

*Terms of the Treaty* The terms of the treaty were as below

***With the Nawab***

1 The state of Oudh was restored to him except the districts of Kara and Allahabad

2 He was made to pay a war indemnity of 50 lakhs

3 An offensive and defensive alliance was concluded

4 The English promised to help the Nawab with troops but on his own expenses

5 The Company got the right of free trade in Oudh

6 The Zamindari of Benaras and Ghazipur was given to Raja Balwant Singh who had come under the protection of the English

***With the Emperor***

1 The Emperor was given the districts of Kara and Allahabad which the company had got from the Nawab of Oudh

2 He was given a pension of 26 lakhs a year

3 In return the emperor had to grant the Diwani of Bengal to the Company

4 He had also to grant the cession of Northern Circars to the English

*Importance* The treaty of Allahabad has a great significance in the history of British India It turned the state of Oudh into a friendly as well as a buffer state between the English dominion of Bengal and the Marathas Kit legalised the holds of the Company on Bengal and northern Sircars Thus the treaty marks the introduction of a ring fence about the English dominion Mughal emperor came under the thumb of the English and was always at their disposal This treaty reveals the statesmanship of Clive who did not annex the state of Oudh but turned it into a friendly ally as well as a buffer state

***Mysore under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan***

Eighteenth century India provided very favourable circumstance for the rise of military adventurers both in the north and the south One such soldier of fortune, Haidar Ali (born 1721) started his career as a horseman and rose to the position of the ruler of Mysore The process of usurpation of royal authority of the Wodeyar ruler Chick Krishnaraj started during 1731-34 when two brothers, Devraj (the Commander-in-Chief) and Nanjaraj (the Controller of Revenue and Finance) controlled real power in the state The quadrangular conflict for supremacy in the Deccan among the Marathas, the Nizam, the English and the

French East India Companies dragged Mysore in the game of adventurous politics The repeated incursions into Mysorean territories of the Marathas in 1753, 1754, 1757 and 1759 and of the Nizam in 1755 and the heavy financial demands made by the invaders rendered the Mysore state financially bankrupt and politically a fertile ground for military exploits at the hands of powerful neighbouring states Devraj and Nanjaraj unable to rise to the occasion had to give place to a man of superior military talent, sound diplomatic skill and unquestioned qualities of leadership By 1761 Haider Ali was the de facto ruler of Mysore

Haider Ali prepared himself to meet the challenges of the time A well-disciplined army with a strong and swift cavalry wing was necessary to meet the challenges of the Marathas, and effective artillery wing alone could counter the French-trained Nizami armies He was also aware of the superior Western know-how in arms manufactures With French help Haider Ali set up an arsenal at Dindigul and also profited from the Western methods of training an army Above all, he learnt the art of permutation, combination at the diplomatic chessboard and tried to out-manoeuver his adversaries in the game During 1761-63 Haider Ali conquered Hoskote, Dod Bellapur, Sera, Bednur etc and subjugated the poligars of south India

The Marathas who had recovered fast from the Panipat debacle (1761) under Peshwa Madhav Rao frequently raised Mysore territory and defeated Haidar Ali in 1764, in 1766 and again in 1771 compelling Haidar to buy off the Marathas as also to surrender some important territories to them Quick to take advantage of political confusion at Poona after the death of Peshwar Madhav Rao in 1772, Haidar Ali

during 1774-76 not only recovered all the territories earlier surrendered to the Marathas but acquired Bellary, Cuddapah, Gooty, Kurnool and important territories in the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab

*The first Anglo-Mysore War (1767-69)* Blinded by their easy successes in Bengal the English concluded a treaty with Nizam Ali of Hyderabad (1766) and in return for the surrender of Northern Circars committed the company to help the Nizam with troops in his the war against Haidar Ali Haidar already had territorial disputes with the ruler of Arcot and differences with the Marathas Suddenly Haidar found a common front of the Nizam, the Marathas and the Nawab of Carnatic operating against him Undaunted, Haider played the diplomatic game, bought the Marathas, allured the Nizam with territorial gains and together with the latter launched an attack on Arcot After a see-saw struggle for a year and half, Haidar suddenly turned the tables on the English and appeared at the gates of Madras The panic-stricken Madras Government concluded the humiliating treaty on 4 April 1769 on the basis of mutual restitution of each other's territories and a defensive alliance between the two parties committing the English to help Haidar in case he was attacked by another power

*The second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84)* The treaty of 1769 between Haider Ali and the English Company proved more in the nature of a truce and Haidar Ali accused the Company of not observing the terms of the defensive treaty by refusing to help him when the Marathas attacked Mysore in 1771 Further, Haider found the French more helpful in meeting his military demands for guns, saltpeter and lead than the English Some French military hardware naturally found its way to Mysore through Mahe, a French port of the Malabar coast The outbreak of the American War of

Independence and French alliance with the American colonists made Warren Hastings extremely suspicious of Haidar Ali's relations with the French Under the circumstances the English attempt to capture Mahe which Haidar considered to be under his protection, was a direct challenge to Haidar Ali

Haidar Ali arranged a joint front with the Nizam and the Marathas against the common enemy—the English East India Company In July 1780 Haidar attacked Carnatic and captured Arcot, defeating an English army under Colonel Braille Meanwhile the English detached the Marathas and the Nizam from the side of Haidar Undaunted, Haidar boldly faced the English but suffered a defeat at Porto Novo (Nov 1781) The following year Haidar inflicted a humiliating defeat on the English army under Col Braithwaite, Braithwaite was taken a prisoner Haider died on 7 December 1782, leaving the task unfinished to his son, Tipu Tipu continued the war for another year, but absolute success eluded both sides Tired of war, the two sides concluded peace by the Treaty to Mangalore (March 1784) on the basis of mutual restitution of each other's territories The second round of the struggle too proved inconclusive

*The Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92)* British imperia-lism, true to its very nature, considered every peace treaty as a breathing time for another offensive against Tipu Acting against the letter and spirit of the policy of peace and non-expansion loudly proclaimed in Pitt's India Act (1784), Lord Cornwallis worked on the anti-Tipu suspicions of the Nizam and the Marathas and arranged a Triple Alliance (1790) with them against Tipu Convinced of the inevitability of a war with English, tipu had sought the help of the Turks by sending an embassy to Constantinople in 1784 and again in 1785 one to the French king in 1787

Tipus' differences with the Raja of Travancore arose over the latter's purchase of Jaikottai and Travancore from the Dutch in Cochin state, Tipu considered the Cochin state as his tributary state and thus considered the act of the Travancore Raja as violation of his sovereign rights He decided to attack Travancore in April 1790 The English, itching for a war, sided with the ruler of Travancore (vide their earlier treaty of 1784) and declared war against Tipu At the head of a large army Cornwallis himself marched through Vellore and Ambur to Bangalore (captured in March 1791) and approached Seiringapatnam The English captured Coimbatore only to lose it later Supported by the Marathas and Nizam's troops the English made a second advance towards Seringapatnam Tipu offered tough resistance but realised the impossibility of carrying further the struggle The Treaty of Serinagapatnam (March 1792) resulted in the surrender of nearly half of Mysorean territory to the victorious allies The British acquired Baramahal, dindigul and Malabar while the Marathas got territory on the tungabhadra side and the Nizam acquired territories from the Krishna to beyond the Pennar Tipu had also to pay a wary indemnity of over three corers of rupees Tipu lost heavily in this round of strength and planning which seemed beyond his resources Cornwallis summed up the Company's gains, "We have effectively crippled our enemy without making our friends too formidable "

*The fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799)* The East India Company's policy in India alternated wars with spells of peace for recuperation of their resources The arrival of imperialist Lord Wellesley as Governor-General in 1798 in the backdrop of Napoleonic danger to India augured ill for the maintenance of status quo Wellesley was determined to either tame Tipu to

submission or wipe out his independence altogether The modus operandi was the Subsidiary Alliance System The charge against Tipu Sultan of planning intrigues with the Nizam and the Marathas or sending emissaries to Arabia, Zaman Shah of Afghanistan or Constantinople or the French in the Isle of France (Mauritius) or the Directory at Versailles were convenient excuses to force down the desired end Tipu's explanation that only "40 persons, French and of a dark colour, of whom 10 or 12 were artificers and the rest servants paid the hire of the ship, came here in search of employment" did not satisfy Wellesley The operations against Tipu began on 17 April and with the fall of Seringapatam on 4 may 1799 brought to a close the history of Mysore's independence Tipu died fighting bravely The members of Tipu's family were interned at Vellore The English annexed Kanara, Coimbatore, Wynad, Dharpouram besides the entire sea coast of Mysore Some territories were given to the Nizam A boy of the earlier Mysore Hindu royal family was installed on the gaddi on Mysore and a Subsidiary Alliance was imposed

The fourth Mysore war destroyed the state of Mysore which was strengthened and taken over by Haider Ali thirty three years back The English offered some territory to the Peshwa on certain conditions which he refused to accept The Nizam was given some territory near his own territory which included Gooti, Gurumkonda minus its fort and the district of Chittaldurg The English occupied Kanada in the West, Bainad, Coimbatore and Darapuram in the south-west and Srirangapatnam and two other districts in the East Rest of the territory of Mysore was handed over to the minor son of the previous Hindu ruler who accepted the subsidiary alliance and, thus became a dependent ally to the English The

members of the family of Tipu were imprisoned in the fort of Vellore

Thus, the state of Mysore was finished by the English It was a grand success of Wellesley and he was rewarded by the title of Marquess by the English Government Regarding its conquest Dean Hutton remarked "As a military, financial and pacificatory settlement the conquest of Mysore was the most brilliant success of the British power since the days of Clive"

***Causes of the fall of Mysore***

Several factors participated in the destruction of the state of Mysore by the British The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas did not like the rise of Mysore in their neighbourhood and, therefore, both of them either sided with the British or remained neutral in most of the cases whenever fighting started between Mysore and the British

The British were certainly superior to the rulers of Mysore in arms, economic resources, fighting skill and art of diplomacy The financial resource of Bengal and the supremacy of the British navy certainly provided superiority to the English against Mysore Besides, while tipu tried to seek help from foreign powers which as not easily possible and could not be possible, the British proved more practical and either succeeded in getting support of the influential states of the South or neutralized them in their favour

Mysore, in fact, was no match to the rising power of the British and once they decided to finish it for ever they succeeded through, in their own interest they achieved it by gradual process

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## Warren Hastings

Warren Hastings joined the English East India Company as a writer at the age of 18 Later on, he was appointed the Resident of Kassim Bazar where he showed that he was a man of parts When the place was captured by Siraj-ud-Daula, he was captured but be managed to escape In 1761, he was made a member of the Calcutta Council He went home for a few years and came back as a member of the Madras Council After the retirement of Cartier, he was appointed the Governor of Bengal in 1772 After the passing of the Regulating Act, he became the Governor-General of Bengal When Warren Hastings took up office as Governor of Bengal, he had to face many difficulties There was chaos in the country There was practically no administration The servants of the Company were doing havoc to the people While the Company was getting nothing and its treasury was empty, its servants were making fortunes There was no administration of justice worth the name, Everything required overhauling In addition to these troubles, the Marathas were a source of danger, The Emperor Shah Alam had left the protection of the British and gone to the Marathas Haidar Ali in the Deccan was another threat Warren Hastings had to meet all these difficulties

*Warren Hastings Reforms—Administrative Reforms* Warren Hastings carried out a large number

of reforms and those may be discussed under four hinds, viz , administrative, revenue, commercial and judicial, As regards administrative reforms Warren Hastings decided to put an end to the dual system of government in Bengal as established by Lord Clive in 1765 The Company was to take over the responsibility of administration of the province It was to stand forth as Diwan and collect the revenue through the agency of its own servants, Mohammad Raza Khan and Raja Shitab Rai who were the deputy Nawabs of Bengal and Bihar were tried for peculation and removed from their offices However, they were honourably acquitted, but the object was achieved The treasury was shifted from Murshidabad to Calcutta The young Nawab of Bengal was put under the control of Munni Begum, the widow of Mir Jafar His pension was reduced from 32 lakhs to 16 lakhs

*Revenue reforms* Although the Company had got the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765, it had not taken over the work of collection of land revenue into its own hands The work had been left in the hands of functionaries called Amils The Amils were no better than contractors and the tenants suffered a lot Although supervisors had been appointed in 1769, no improvement was made Warren Hastings appointed a Committee and its President toured certain parts of Bengal to collect information His conclusion was that the Company must directly collect the revenue Consequently, Warren Hastings appointed collectors for revenue collection and administration, They were to be helped by native officers Settlement was made for 5 years with the highest bidders To supervise the whole organisation, a Board of Revenue was established at Calcutta The system of farming out the land to the highest bidders for 5 years was found to be defective and consequently in 1777 the old system of

bidding for a year was resorted to As the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam had left the protection of the British, Warren Hastings stopped the payment of 26 lacs of rupees a year He also took over the districts of Kora and Allahabad from the Mugal Emperor and sold them to the Nawab Wazir of Oudh for Rs 50 lacs He made the accounts of revenue simple and intelligible, and made many provisions for the protection of the ryots He also cut off from the list a large number of Abwabs The Banyas were prevented from lending money to the ryots

*Commercial Reforms* He prohibited the use of Dustuks by the servants of the Company and thereby added to the revenues of the Company A large number of custom houses or Chowkies were hampering the growth of trade in the count and consequently he abolished them In future there were to be only 5 custom houses at Calcutta, Hugli, Murshidabad, Patna and Dacca The uniform reduction of 21/2 per cent in duties on all goods except salt, betelnut and tobacco, was ordered The result of all these reforms was that trade improved Warren Hastings boasted that "goods passed unmolested to the extremities of the province "

*Judicial Reforms* Warren Hastings carried out a large number of reforms in the judicial sphere In 1772, be provided for the collection in each district of a provincial Court of Diwani Adalat for all civil cases, Over this court presided the Collector Provision was made for appeal to the Sadar Diwani Adalat at Calcutta which consisted of the Governor and at least two members of the Council Provision was also made for criminal courts In the Faujdari Adalat sat the Kadi and Mufti of the district with two Maulvis to expound the law It was the duty of collector to see that in criminal cases evidence was duly submitted and weighed and the decision was not only fair and

impartial but also given in the open court The Faujdari Adalats were supervised by the Sadar Nizamat Adalat which was presided over by the Daroga Adalat appointed by the Nazim The Daroga Adalat consisted of he Chief Kadi, the Chief Mufti and three Maulvis The proceedings of the Sadar Nizamat Adalat were supervised by the Governor and the Council

Provision was made for the improvement of procedure in the courts, The courts were not only to keep their records of proceedings but also send the same to the Sadar Diwani Adalat The head farmers of the Parganas were empowered to try cases so that the ryots may not have to travel long distances in search of justice Provision was made for arbitration by consent In case of, marriage, inheritance, caste and religious usage, the decision was to be given according to the Koran for the Mohammedans and Shastras for the Hindus The decisions of the Mofussil Adalats were final up to Rs 5,000 In other cases, an appeal could be taken Faujdari Adalats were not allowed to pass death sentences Fines over Rs 100 were to be confirmed by the Sadar Adalat Dacoits were to be executed in their own villages and their families were to be made slaves Their villages were to be fined and the police officers who captured them, were to be given rewards Warren Hastings made certain changes in 1774 The three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were divided into six divisions and in each of these divisions a Council consisting of 4 or 5 covenanted servants of the English Company was created Each division consisted of many districts and a Diwan or Amil took the place of the Collector He collected revenue but also acted as judge Provision was also made for the Provincial Court of Appeal

A further change in the judicial system was made in 1780 Provision was made for the establishment of a court of Diwani Adalat in every division This court was to be presided over by the Superintendent of the Diwani Adalat He was to be an Englishman and a covenanted servant of the Company The Provincial Courts of appeal were deprived of their judicial powers Up to Rs 1,000 the decision of the Courts of Diwani Adalat were to be final and if the amount involved was more, an appeal could be taken to the Sadar Diwani Adalat

There was constant conflict between the Supreme Court of Calcutta and the executive and consequently Warren Hastings appointed Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief justice of the Supreme Court, as the sole judge of the Sadar Diwani Adalat Impey held this office for two years when he, was made to resign on account of criticism at home However, he was able to introduce a large number of reforms which improved the administration if justice in the Mofussil

In 1781, it was provided that Superintendents of Diwani Adalats were also to act as magistrates They were to assist those persons who were .suspected to have committed c rimes After arrest, they were to be sent to the nearest Mofussil Faujdari Adalat for trial

Warren Hastings created a new department at Calcutta Its head was known as the Remembrancer of Criminal Courts He was to receive all the reports and returns from the Mofussil Faujdari Adalats His duty was to analyse those reports and prepare extracts from them However, that work was not very useful

*Warren Hastings Oudh Policy* Warren Hastings continued the buffer State policy towards Oudh He was determined to continue good relations with the Nawab on account of the danger from the Marathas In

1772, he concluded the Treaty of Banaras by which Kora and Allahabad were sold to the Nawab of Oudh for Rs 50 lacs If the Nawab paid a subsidy the English Company was to tend him the and of British troops whenever required

*The Rohilla War* The people of Rohilkhand were frequently attacked by the Marathas and consequently their ruler entered into a treaty with the Nawab Wazir of Oudh in 1772 It was agreed between the parties that if the Marathas invaded Rohilkhand, the Nawab Wazir was to help the Rohillas and get Rs 40 lacs as the price of his help The very next year, the Marathas invaded Rohilkhand, but retired on account, of the approach of British and Oudh troops The Nawab Wazir of Oudh demanded money and the Rohillas evaded it Ultimately, the Nawab Wazir of Oudh contracted with the English Company to bear all the expenses of war and to ay Rs 50 lacs in addition if he, were given military help to conquer Rogikhand Warren Hastings accepted the proposition British troops were sent Rohilkhand was conquered Hafiz Rahmat Khan, their leader, was killed About 20,000 Rohillas were turned out from the country The soldier of the Nawab committed atrocities on the innocent people of Rohilkhand and the country was annexed to Oudh

*Hastings* policy towards Rohilkhand has been severely condemned and it was one of the points of his impeachment Undoubtedly, Warren Hastings was moved by two considerations He wanted more money for the Company and this he could get from the Nawab of Oudh Rohilkhand occupied a strategic position and its occupation by Oudh would protect Oudh from the attacks of the Marathas If a policy is judged by its results, Hastings' Rohilla as more than justified Rohillas were not Wrong enough to protect themselves

from the attacks of the Marathas and it would have been a folly to allow them to fall into the hands of the Marathas That would have seriously jeopardised the safety of Bengal itself However, it is pointed out that the Rohillas had done nothing against the Company and consequently there was no moral justification for the English help to Oudh merely for the sake of money The British arms were prostituted for hire Moreover, such an action was against the instructions of the Directors Such an interference created an unfortunate precedent Any body could hire the, services of British, troops on payment of, money It is rontended that the Rohilla war should be beyond defence by any critic with principles

*Trial of Nand Kumar* Nand Kumar was a higher influential Brahman of Bengal He not only moved in higher circles but also indulged in higher politics He had been found guilty of carrying on intrigues with those zamindars who had revolted against the English Company

When differences arose between Warren Hastings and the members of his Council, Nand Kumar tried to take advantage of them He accused Warren Hastings of having been bribed to dismiss Mohd Raza Khan and of having sold several public offices Philip Francis read the paper of accusation in the presence of Warren Hastings Nand Kumar requested to be heard in person in support of his accusation Warren Hastings refused to be confronted with Nand Kumar at his own Council table He refused to allow his Councillors to sit in judgment over him He dissolved the meeting and departed In his absence, the other members of the Council called in Nand Kumar and decided to go on with the charges

However, Nand Kumar was suddenly arrested and

committed to prison on a charge of forgery The Council of the Governor-General protested and remonstrated, but a jury of the Supreme Court found Nand Kumar guilty of forgery and he was sentenced to be hanged and was actually hanged

The legality of the trial and conviction of Nand Kumar has been questioned The Supreme Court has been accused of committing judicial murder " Critics point out that both the trial and conviction were illegal There is a controversy whether the English statute of 1728 relating to forgery was applicable to Calcutta or not

It was contended that there was a conspiracy between Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief justice of the Supreme Court, and Warren Hastings The conviction and execution of Nand Kumar were the outcome of that conspiracy However, it is pointed out that Nand Kumar was not tried by the Chief justice alone but by other judges of the Supreme Court as well He was held guilty not only by all the judges of the Supreme Court but also by the members of the jury However, it cannot be denied that the judges of Supreme Court examined the defence witnesses in such a way that the whole of the defence of Nand Kumar collapsed That was an unusual procedure to adopt Moreover, the judges of the Supreme Court rejected the application of Nand Kumar for leave to appeal to the King-in-Council Although this was a very suitable case for leave to appeal, the same was refused All these facts pointed out to the mala fides of the judges of Supreme Court

According to P E Roberts, "It is very doubtful whether the Supreme Court had any jurisdiction over the natives and there is practically, no doubt at all that the English law making forgery a capital crime

was not operative in India till many years after Nand Kumar's alleged forger had been committed "

*Case of Chet Singh* Balwant Singh, father of Chet Singh was a vassal of the Nawab of Oudh He was the first Raja of Banaras In 1775, Banaras was transferred to the Company by the Nawab of Oudh and consequently the English Company became the overlord of Chet Singh He paid annually rent of his land to the Company and the same could not be enhanced However, he was bound to help his new masters in times of difficulty In 1778, Warren Hastings asked for a special contribution of Rs 5 lacs from Chet Singh and the latter paid the same Next year, a similar demand was made and was complied with after hesitation In 1780, Chet Singh was asked to give two thousand horses The Raja pleaded his inability and offered to provide one thousand horses Although Hastings lowered his demand the Raja did not comply with the same The Raja had also not paid his regular tribute Warren, Hastings was in great financial difficulty He imposed a fine of Rs 50 lad on Chet Singh and marched to Banaras to realise the same Chet Singh submitted to Warren Hastings who got him arrested However, the Raja managed to escape There was rioting and bloodshed Situation was brought under control with some difficulty Ultimately the Raja was deposed and his nephew was put in his place The latter was required to pay tribute at double the rate

Warren Hastings treatment of Chet Singh has been severely condemned It is pointed out that Chet Singh was not bound to help the English Company if the latter was in financial difficulty Moreover, Warren Hastings was too exacting His conduct was unjust, improper and high-handed It was tyranny pure and simple, The very purpose for which Warren Hastings

took all the tribue, was defeated because the treasury of Chet Singh was looted by the troops and nothing fell into the hands of Warren Hastings

*Begums of Oudh* The Nawab Wazir of Oudh owed a lot of money to the English Company and he was not in a position to pay, Warren Hastings wanted money very badly The Nawah Wazir told Warren Hastings that he could pay the money only if he was allowed to resume the Jagirs and treasures held by his mother and grandmother, who were known as the Begums of Oudh Although both the Jagirs and treasure,, were guaranteed to the Begums by the Calcutta Council by the Treaty of Chanar of 1781, Hastings allowed the Nawab of Oudh to take possession of them The Nawab hesitated to take action against his own mother and grandmother but he was forced to do so by Warren Hastings The result was that British troops were sent to do the job The place of the Begums, was surrounded The two eunuchs, who acted as stewards, were tortured in every possible way and ultimately were forced to part with the money With the money thus secured, the Nawab Wazir was able to pay off the debts of the Company

Dr V A Smith defended the action of Warren Hastings on the ground of expediency According to him, "Urgent neessities of the time justified Hastings in cancelling treaty obligation and putting a certain amount Of pressure on the Begums to make them disgorge"' He also stated that the treatment meted out to the Begums was mild according to the Indian standards Moreover, Warren Hastings had no personal knowledge of coercive measures adopted by the troops of the Company However, such a defence is insufficient to convince any impartial leader It has been proved that Warren Hastings was the moving spirit throughout the period when the tragedy was

being enacted As a matter of fact, it was Warren Hastings who forced the hands of Nawab Wazir when the latter hesitated to take action against his mother and grandmother The doctrine of urgent necessity cannot be put forward to justify all the acts high-handedness on the part of the English troops and the civil servants According to Sir Alfred Lyall "The employment of personal severities under the superintendence of British officers in order to extract money from women and eunuchs is an ignoble kind of undertaking, to push him (Nawab) and actively assist in measure of coercion against women and eunuchs was conduct unworthy and indefensible " Moreover there is nothing to prove that the Begums of Oudh were in league with Chet Sigh If such was the case it was the duty of Hastings to put forward evidence in his possession to support this allegation

Regulating Act and Council The Regulating Act was assed in 1773 and it provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court of Calcutta and Governor-General's Council This Council was to consist four members and the Governor-General was given a casting vote only in the case of a tie Out of the 4 members, 3 of them came from England and those were Clavering, Monson and Francis Only Barwell was in India at the time of his appointment From the very beginning, the three members who came from England started opposing Warren Hastings The result was that on many occasions Warren Hastings was overruled and he was made to do things which he did not approve of at all The majority of his Council condemned the Rohilla war The British Resident at Lucknow was called back Likewise, the Councillors recognised the claims of the Begums of Oudh to the Jagirs and the treasure The same Council allowed Nand Kumar to denounce Warren Hastings in

the Council itself The condition of Warren Hastings was so very difficult in his Council that on one occasion he instructed his agent to tender his resignation to the Company However, things became better after a lapse of time In 1776, Monson died a natural death In 1777, Clavering died of dysentery In 1780, Warren Hastings wounded Francis in a duel and die latter left for England It has rightly been said that "the members of the Council died, sickened and fled away"

Warren Hastings and Supreme Court, The Regulating Act also set up a Supreme Court at Calcutta Unfortunately, the powers of the Supreme Court were not clearly defined and that led to a conflict of jurisdiction between the Supreme Court of Calcutta and the courts of the Company There were frequent tussles between the two authorities In, the case of Raja of Cossijurah, the two authorities came into open conflict In this case, the Supreme Court issued a writ of capius against the Raja for his arrest The only way the defendant could save himself was by means of furnishing security Instead of doing that, the Raja concealed himself and thereby avoided the service of the writ, and the same was returned without service Warren Hastings was informed by die Collector that the Raja was a zamindar and was concealing himself to avoid the service of the writ and consequently the revenue of the Company was not being collected Warren Hastings consulted the Advocate-General and directed the Raja not to appear or plead before the Supreme Court or in any way submit to its jurisdiction, A general notification was issued by the Government that zamindars were not subject to the jurisdiction of Supreme Court unless they accepted the same by their own consent

The Supreme Court took up the challenge and

issued another, writ to sequester the land and property of the Raja Sixty men, headed by a sargeant of the Supreme Court, were sent to execute the writ The Raja complained that the persons deputed by the Supreme Court entered house, beat and wounded his servants, broke pen and forcibly entered his zenana, stripped his place of religious worship of its ornaments and prohibited his farmers from paying his rents

The Governor-General and the Council instructed the Raja not to obey the process of the Supreme Court and ordered the troops of the Company to intercept the party of the Sheriff and retain them in custody As a matter of fact, the troops of the Company caught hold of the party of the Court and brought them to Calcutta The Supreme Court took action against the Advocate-General and the officers who had seized the Sheriff's party The result was that the Advocate-General was put into prison

Baboo, Cassinaut brought an action against the Governor-General, and the members of the Council individually for trespass To begin with the Governor-General and the members of his Council appeared before the Supreme Court, but later on they retired and refused to submit to any process which the Supreme Court might issue A petition was signed by the prominent British inhabitants of Bengal and sent to British Parliament against the exercise of its power by the Supreme Court of Calcutta The result was the passing of the Amending Act of 1781 One of the objects of the new Act was to give relief to certain "persons imprisoned at Calcutta under the judgment of the Supreme Court and also indemnifying the Governor-General and Council and all officers who have acted under their orders or authority in the undue resistance made to the process of the Supreme Court " The Act of 1781 reduced the powers of the

Supreme Court and the conflict between the Supreme Court and the Court of the Company was avoided

According to Prof Davies, "The importance of the Regulating Act in Hastings' life can hardly be overestimated It marked a milestone in his career for the whole of the rest of his administration was to be spent under the sway of this Act, he being the only Governor-General of India to suffer that unhappy fate Its consequences to India in general were to be serious but to him personally they were to be nothing less than catastrophic For if ever a man has had his life ruined for him by Act of Parliament, that man was Warren Hastings The story of his life during the next twenty years may be simply stated in two sentences, thus, Parliament by passing this Act was, the prime cause of the troubles and difficulties in which he immediately became involved, and Parliament by impeaching him for the way he extricated himself from these difficulties shifted on to his shoulders the responsibility for its own negligence and folly Perhaps, if anybody deserved impeaching it was Lord North, the author and executor of the Act"

Contemporary opinion on the merits of the Act was very varied It naturally accorded with George the third's ideas, and the expressed pleasure at its smooth passage to the statute book Equally, naturally, it was bitterly resented and condemned by the Company and its friends Burke denounced it as an infringement of national right, national faith, and natural justice' Others of them described it as a medley of inconsistencies, dictated by tyranny, yet bearing throughout each line the mark of ignorance

The mark of ignorance was, indeed, but too plainly visible, nor need it excite surprise The framers of the Act were utterly ignorant of India and had not,

it would seem, deemed it fit to consult those with the possible exception of Lord Clive, who could have given them good advice Lord North might have paid heed to Hastings' views, but the Act was passed before he had time to deliver them The suspicion tests upon ministers of thinking more about obtaining for the Crown a share in the extensive patronage rights of India than providing its government with a sound, workable constitution In the eyes of both the supporters and the opponents of the Act, the chief point at issue was the rights of the East India Company

"A recent verdict on the Act is that it was 'probably on the whole an honest attempt to deal with a difficult problem Yet, even if conceivably this be so, the fact remains that by passing it Lord North very nearly achieved a double title to fame as the minister who lost Great Britain her Eastern as well as her Western Empire The man who was to save him from this ignominy was Warren Hastings "

*Foreign Policy of Warren Hastings First Maratha War (1778-82)* In 1772, Narayan Rao became the Peshwa after the death of Midho Rao However, he was murdered at the instigation of Raghoba who himself wanted to become the Peshwa Nana Farnavis took up the cause of the posthumous son of Narayan Rao against Raghoba The latter asked for English help By the treaty of Surat (1775) Raghoba agreed to give to the Government of Bombay Salsette and Bassein as the price of English help This was done without the knowledge of the Governor-General The English attacked Salsette and defeated the Marathas at Arass Both the Governor-General and the Calcutta Council disapproved of the treaty of Surat A new treaty was concluded called the Treaty of Purandar (1776) According to it, all places including Bassein

taken by the English during the war since the Treaty of Purandar were to be restored to the Peshwa The island of Salsette and the small ones near Bombay were to remain in the possession of the English The city of Broach was to remain with the English, The territory conquered in Gujarat by the English was to be restored to the Peshwa and the Gaikwad to whom they belonged The English were not to give support to Raghunathrao in money or otherwise He was to choose his residence and Rs 25,000 a month were to be paid by the Peshwa for his, maintenance However, the Directors of the Company approved of the Treaty of Surat and war had to be continued The English were defeated and had to conclude the Convention of Wargaon by which they promised to surrender Raghoba, restore all acquisitions made by them and give British hostage Hastings refused to ratify the convention Goddard marched from Bengal to Surat He captured Ahmedabad and made an alliance with the Gaikwad of Baroda He was defeated when he advanced towards Poona Major-Podhani captured Gwalior, the capital of Scindia Colonel Gamac was successful in surprising the camp of Scindia A confederacy was formed against the English in 1779 and it included the Nizam, Haidar Ali and the Marathas However, Warren Hastings was able to bribe the Raja of Nagpur and make peace with Scindia

Ultimately, the Treaty of Salbai was signed this treaty, the fort of Thana with the island of Salsette

Raghunathrao Raghunathrao was to receive an allowance of Rs 3,15,000 only for his maintenance He was to withdraw completely from the State affairs The English were to retain the territory they had conquered in Gujarat and to cease to interfere with the

affairs of the Gaikwad

According to Smith, the Treaty of Salbai was one of the great land marks in the history of India However, Hastings' Maratha policy has been condemned It is pointed out that the English got nothing more than what they had already got by the Treaty of purandar The loss of men and money was superfluous From the point of view of the Marathas, the Treaty of Salbai was a great mistake It was brought about by the nervousness and selfishness of Scindia If war had been continued, history might have been written otherwise The peace which was established by Warren Hastings with the Marathas was a stroke of diplomacy which was invaluable to him in his southern wars

According to Keene, "This treaty made an epoch in history It was by means of this Treaty that without annexing a square mile of territory the British power became virtually paramount in the greater part of the Indian peninsula, every province of which with the one exception of Mysore acknowledged that power as the greatest universal peacemaker" According to Sardesai, "This Treaty forms an important landmark in the political history of India and it was being shaped for over a year The British tried their hand against the Marathas and suffered a setback from which they found it difficult to recover their position Nana long continued to point out to Mahadji the flaws and shortcomings of that clumsy agreement and urged that Upton's Treaty and the contract of Wadgaon should be fully carried out But Mahadji had no other alternative and did, it must be admitted, honestly try to secure the best bargain possible The fort of Thana and the fertile island of Salsette were finally lost to the perpetual regret of the Maratha nation, Mahadji certainly raised his own importance by accepting the

guarantee for the proper observance of the terms Hastings honoured him by offering his own friendship and allowing him a free hand in the management of the imperial affairs for which Hastings came to be censured by British diplomacy and which Mahadji did not fail to make the basis of his future rise"

According to Dr Shanti Prasad Verma, the Treaty of Salbai forms in important landmark in the political history of India, But Keene was certainly exaggerating its effects on the future of British Empire in India V A Smith was less sweeping in his observation than Keene when he wrote that this Treaty not only assured peace with the formidable power of the Marathas for 20 years but "marked the ascendancy of the English as the controlling, although not yet the paramount government in India" Lt Col Luard is right when he says that the Treaty "formed the turning point in the history of the English in India" But he is merely para-phrasing Keene and V A Smith when he adds that without the acquisition of any fresh territory, it established beyond dispute the dominance of the British controlling factor in Indian politics, their subsequent rise in 1818 to the position of the paramount power being an inevitable result of the position gained by the Treaty of Salbai" Warren Hastings took a more realistic view when the modestly described it as "a successful negotiation of peace in the most desperate period of my distresses" For the English, the Treaty of Salbai was a clear acknowledgment of failure, According to Janse and Banaji, the phrase 'annexing a square inch' smacks of historical travesty in the light of the appalling territorial and political sacrifices which the Governor-General consented to make Territories acquired by consent or Treaty were restored, indemnities which the

Poona Darbar had Promised to pay by the Treaty of Purandar were written off the Treaty formally acknowledging the Gaikwad's political independence was torn up like a scrap of paper, Fateh Singh Gaikwad reverted to h prewar state of quasi-vassalage, the Marathas attacked the British shipping with impunity Yet we are asked to believe that by the Treaty of Salbai British power virtually became paramount in the greater part of the Indian Peninsula " According to Dr Verma, "The loyalty of the Marath chiefs had never been really put to the test before It 'was now put to the test and not found wanting With the exception of Raghoba not a single Maratha chieftain willingly colluded with the English Everybody Put his shoulder to the wheel and gave the confederacy whatever strength he could All internal differences were set aside There were grumblings but they were gracefully expressed Weakness was tolerated, every little contribution made to the common cause was given its due recognition The Treaty of Salbai was the result of closest collaboration between the two leading figures of the Maratha State Nana Phadnavis and Mahadji by their supreme exertions in war and peace saved the Maratha Empire for a period of 20 years by pushing back the rising tide of the English aggression from their territories and regaining their losses "

According to Dr Sailendra Nath Seri, "The treaty of Salbai formed an important landmark in the history of India as it secured to the English the alliance of the most formidable power in the country The foundation on which the British Empire in India rested in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was weak The structure which Clive had created was not yet sufficiently strong to resist the sweep of the invasions

of the Marathas and the Mysoreans It was left to Hastings to turn the tide by converting the Marathas to an alliance with the English against Haidar Ali, In the political game of chess Hastings had won and in this respect the treaty of Salbai 'marked the ascendancy of the English as the controlling, although not ' yet the paramount Government in India "

*Rise of Hyder Ali* Warren Hastings had also to fight against Hyder Ali (1722-82), Not much is known about the ancestors of Hyder Ali One of his ancestors is said to have migrated to Southern India from the Punjab His father, was a Nayak in the army of Subedar of Sira Later on, he became Faujdar of the Raja of Mysore who granted him the jagir of Budikota It was at Budikota that Hyder Ali was born in 1721 or 1722 Hyder Ali did not receive any education and also did not accomplish much up to the age of 27 However, after that, he shot into prominence as a military leader By dint of his military skill and qualities of leadership, he became the Faujdar of Dindigal in 1755 By misappropriating the revenues of Dindigal, he managed to raise an independent arm for himself In 1763, he occupied Bednore With the booty which fell into his hands, he strengthened his financial position He also conquered Canara He became the undisputed master of the Mysore State with Seringapatain as its capital He was able to build up a strong war-machine within a short time

There were many factors which were responsible for his unhappy relations with the English East India Company In the earlier phase of his Career, Hyder Ali had secured valuable aid from the French In 1760, Portuguese bishop had promoted an alliance between him and the French For his aid against the English, Count Lally had agreed to pay Hyder Ali Rs 10,000

per month and also the Forts of Thaigur and Elvanasore After the expulsion of the English, Hyder Ali was expected to have Trichnopoly, Madurai, Tinnevelly, etc The British force under Major More sent to prevent Hyder Ali from joining the French was routed However, the capture of Villenore by Coote exercised a demoralising influence on Hyder Ali and weakened his alliance with the French When Hyder Ali was busying in crushing his opponents in Mysore, the English did much to discredit him This was strongly resented by Hyder Ali When Pondicherry surrendered to the English in January 1761, Hyder Ali took about 300 French soldiers in his service

'Another factor which strained the relations "between Hyder Ali and die British was the hostility between Mohammed Ali, the Niwab of Carnatic and Hyder Ali There were many districts in the Carnatic which were claimed by both Mohammed Ali allowed British troops to be stationed at Vellore and this was not approved of by Hyder Ali Hyder Ali also took into his service Raja Sahib, the son of Chanda Sahib and gave protection to Mahfuz Khan, brother and rival of Mohammed Ali

It is true that after the collapse of the French power in Southern India, Hyder Ali tried to patch up with the British As a matter of fact, he made an offer of friendship to the Madras authorities and the latter sent Pourchier to test his sincerity However, he had to return without meeting Hyder Ali as the time and place of meeting could not be settled The real reason seems to have been that the Madras authorities had a second thought and decided to check the expansionist activities of Hyder Ali As a matter of fact, the Madras Government encouraged the Nizam to take up arms against Hyder Ali and offered to give necessary,

military help for that purpose A military alliance was entered into between the English Company and the Nizam The Nizam already enjoyed the support of the Marathas and thus a triple alliance was formed against Hyder Ali In November, 1767, the Madras Government concluded a treaty with the Nizam by which it agreed to pay him a tribute of Rs 5 lakhs for the three Northern Circars The Madras Government also promised not to acquire the Circar of Guntoor as long as Basalat Jang lived The British promised military help to Nizam against his enemies The Madras Government was eager to acquire Carnatic and Balaghat which were then held by Hyder Ali and agreed to pay Rs 7 lakhs to the Nizam for its Diwani This engagement acknowledged the sovereignty of the Nizam over the dominions of Hyder Ali Both the Nizarn and the Poona Government were very keen to prey upon on the territories of Hyder Ali and the British Government also agreed to help them

*First Mysore War (1767-69)* The British alliance with the Nizarn provoked Hyder Ali, the ruler of Mysore With British forces under Col Smith, the Nizam advanced into Mysore in August 1767 It is true that Hyder Ali was faced with a very serious situation but he rose to the occasion and was able to win over the Marathas by promising them a sum of Rs 23 lakhs He also managed to win over the Nizam The result was that the English were left alone The British fought well but the opposition of Hyder Ali and his son Tipu was formidable Tipu was able to reach near Madras 'itself and plundered its suburbs The Madras authorities became panickly and begged for peace Hyder Ali virtually dictated the terms of peace which were concluded on April 4, 1769 The treaty showed that Hyder Ali was both a strategist and a

diplomat His success was also due to the efficiency and superiority of his vast cavalry which made it possible for him to campaign on an extensive scale The Court of Directors had to admit that the war had been "very improperly conducted and most disadvantageously concluded"

The treaty of 1769 was based on the mutual restitution of conquests but the fort and the district of Kurur were to be retained by Hyder Ali There was also a provision for an alliance for mutual aid in case either party was attacked by a third power The Madras authorities had to agree to this clause as Hyder Ali insisted on this This was advantageous to Hyder Ali as he was always in danger of attacks from the Marathas

In 1770, Mysore was invaded by Peshwa Madhav Rao The Madras Government was approached for help by Hyder Ali against the Peshwa, but it decided to remain neutral Hyder Ali treated this As a violation of the terms of the Treaty of 1769 The, Madras Government also refused to supply war material to Hyder Ali, The Bombay Government concluded it with Hyder Ali which allowed them trading privileges in Mysore in exchange for guns, saltpetre, lead, etc However, that Treaty was disapproved by the Court of Directors in 1772 But that did not upset Hyder Ali Bombay Government also concluded the Treaty of Surat in March, 1775 by which they committed themselves to support the claim of Raghoba who was contesting for the Peshwaship The British were to get Salsette and Bassein In spite of all this, Hyder Ali tried to establish friendly relations with the British and when ultimately he failed he was very bitter He took possession of the Maratha State of Gooti He took many Frenchmen in his service and also secured arms

ind stores from the French He also made friends with he Dutch

Things were very bad in Madras Lord Pigot, its Governor, was confined by certain members of the Council and he died in detention in August, 1776, Sir Thomas Rumbold, his successor, was more interested n making money than looking after the interests of his nation British relations with Hyder Ali took a turn for the worse The British were getting involved in a war with tire Poona Government on behalf of Raghoba In August 1778, the British attacked Pondicherry and after its occupation, they sent an expedition against Mahe Hyder Ali protested as hie was getting his military supplies mostly through Mahe Hyder Ali sent his troops to defend Mahe but in spite of that Mahe fell in March 1779, This embittered the relations between Hyder Ali and the British The Nizam was also not happy with the Madras Government as they withheld tribute for the northern Circars, It was under these circumstances that the Grand Quadruple Alliance consisting of Hyder Ali, the Nizam, the Poona Government and Bhonsle of Nagpur was formed against the British,

*Second Mysore War (1780-4)* Hostilities started in 1780 Bhonsle of Nagpur who was the enemy of the Poona Government was won over by Warren Hastings and he left the alliance The Nizam also deserted Hyder Ali The Poona Government also left the alliance The result was that Hyder Ali was left alone to fight against the British

During the early phase of the war, the war-machine of Hyder Ali was superior to the British armies The army of Hyder Ali burst like an avalanche and swept away many villages and towns It carried fire and sword in the Carnatic It was so near Madras

that many of its residents ran away in panic, The towns of Porto Novo and Conjeevaram were plundered The armies led by Col Baillic and Col Fletcher were backed to pieces Munro, the Commander-in-Chief, threw his artillery in a tank and retired to Madras Hyder Ali occupied Arcot, the capital of Cranatic

When Sir Eyre Coote took over the supreme command in the South, the situation was critical However, things began to improve Sir Eyre Coote was able to hold Hyder Ali and deal with him effectively at Porto Novo in July 1781 Hyder Ali was forced to recall Tipu who was besieging Wandiwash The battle at Pollilure in August 1781 was a drawn one In 1781, Sir Eyre Coote inflicted a crushing defeat to HyderAli at Solingen Nagapatam and Trincomali were also captured by the British In spite of these reverses, Hyder Ali continued to fight in a vigorous manner He was suffering from cancer and he died on December 7, 1782

It cannot be denied that Hyder Ali was a leader of outstanding merit, a soldier endowed with superb strategic insight, an efficient administration, a diplomat of a high order, a man though unlettered, yet possessing a large measure of commonsense He rarely lost his balance of mind, whether in victory or in defeat He was both a strategist and a diplomat

After the death of Hyder Ali, the war was continued by Tipu He successfully wrested Bednore but failed to capture Mangalore The British took the offensive and proceeded towards Seringapatam Both sides were sick of the war and ultimately the treaty of Mangalore was concluded on May 11, 1784 Tipu tried to show that it was the English Company which had sued for peace The English Commissioner who negotiated the peace treaty remained standing with

his head uncovered and with a copy of the treaty on his outstretched hands for nearly two hours as indicating that they were "using every form of flattery and supplication to induce compliance" The Vakils of Poona and Hyderabad had also to undergo the same humiliation

After the conclusion of the Second Mysore War, the old conflict between the Marathas and Mysore started Nana Fadnis resumed the traditional policy of hostility towards Mysore Grant Duff points out that Nana Fadnis was even eager to intervene in the final stages of the Second Mysore War to create an impression that Tipu was "a Mahratta dependent as well as a tributory" It was his jealousy of the growing influence of Scindia and the rivalry between Holkar and Scindia that kept him inactive "However, in 1784, Nana Fadnis and the Nizam concluded the convention of Yadgir to fight against Tipu The Poona Government was eager to recover the territory south of the river Krishna ceded to Mysore by the Maratha-Mysore Treaty of 1780 In the MarathaMysore war of 1796, the English remained aloof However, their sympathies were with the Marathas as they did not like the State' of Mysore to become stable and powerful In spite of that, Tipu was successful in his fight against the Marathas who were forced to accept his sovereignty over the territory between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra Tipu took up the title of Padshah

Tipu was aware of the British intrigues against him at Poona and Hyderabad and he tried to improve his position by coming to some understanding with foreign powers His efforts to get help from Turkey and France failed

When Tipu was occupied in the war with the Marathas and the rebellions of the chiefs in Coorg and

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It is true that he made many mistakes of omission and commission and for those mistakes he was impeached on his return to England The trial lasted from 1788 to 1795 In spite of the inconvenience and expense to which he was subjected by the impeachment, he was ultimately honourably acquitted

According to Lord Macaulay, Warren Hastings "dissolved the double government He transferred the direction of affairs to the English hands Out of a fruitful anarchy, he educed at least a rude and imperfect order, The only quarter in which Britain lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings In spite of the utmost exertions of both European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our Company in the East greatly augmented "

In his reply to his impeachment, Warren Hastings declared thus "The valour of others acquired, I enlarged and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you held there, I preserved it, I sent forth its armies with an effectual but an economic hand, through unknown and hostile regions to the support of your possessions, to the retrieval of one (Bombay) from degradation and dishonour, and of the other (Madras) from utter loss and subjection I maintained the wars which were of your formation or that of others, not of mine "

Warren Hastings was the oldest of the able men who gave to Great Britain her Indian empire He was a versatile genius He had a limitless energy and strong determination He was the first foreign ruler who succeeded in gaining the confidence of the princes of India

According to Lord Curzon, "I doubt if in the entire history of public affairs any man has been so cruelly

persecuted or more persistently tried Surrounded by vindictive enemies, daily outvoted and insulted in his own Council, accused by his colleagues of the meanest of crimes, confronted by a series of situations that might have daunted the most heroic spirit, with an empty treasury and a discontented service, and beset by frequent ill-health, Hastings showed a patience, fortitude, a fertility of resource, and a self-control that could only have proceeded from a character profoundly conscious both of its own, integrity and, its, power to prevail " Again, "Side by side with this deep tenacity of purpose, there was to be found in his nature a tender heartedness and generosity which, while it was constantly imposed upon by the crowd of bloodsuckers, mendicant friends, and impoverished relatives who infested him on every side, and while it tempted him sometimes in its public aspect to repose undue confidence in quite unsuitable and unworthy persons, rendered him incapable of parsimony in his own interest, and left him almost alone among the higher civil servants of that time, in constant need of money, and, when he retired, in possession of a fortune which in those days might fairly be regarded as modest and which had been acquired by honourable means Even Macaulay pauses in his full-throated declamation to offer a halting, tribute to Hastings' general uprightness with respect to money "

"There were many other attractive features in the character of the Governor-General He was almost the only one in the long list of the British rulers of India who took a real interest in literature, scholarship and the arts His correspondence with the 'Great Cham' which is referred to and in part quoted in Boswell's Life, is well-known So is Boswell's appreciation of him as a man the extent of whose abilities was equal to that of his power, and who, by those who are fortunate

enough to know him in private life, is admired for his literature and taste, and beloved for the candour, moderation and mildness of his character Hastings was well-versed in Persian and Arabic literature, and tried to establish a Persian Professorship at Oxford University He founded with Sir William Jones the Asiatic Society of Bengal, instituted the Mohammedan Madrassa or College at Calcutta and patronised, even if he did not understand Sanskrit His library, both in India, where it was constantly replenished, from England, and after his return, at Daylesford, testified to the wide range of his reading Like most cultured men of that day he dabbled in vendfication, of a somewhat academic and pedestrian character, whether it took the form of translation from the classics or of poems of his wife On the other hand, he was the master of a nervous and polished literary style, and even the author of 'Junius', no mean authority, admitted that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings Macaulay acclaimed him as the real founder of the school of official writing in India He was the friend and patron of painters, as was testified by the many portraits of him by the foremost artists of the day, and he encouraged the 'Visits to India and the artistic work of Hodges, Zoffuny and Devis"

According to Prof A M Davies, "Hastings has always been and will always remain the subject of controversy He has suffered from friend and foe alike, from opponents who have used unmeasured and undeserved invective, from admirers who can see nothing but wisdom and ability in his career The knowledge which most Englishmen have of Clive and Hastings has filtered through the rhetoric of Macaulay But even admirers of Macaulay's famous essays, with their purple patches like those which describe the night Clive spent before Plassey and the great trial of

Hastings in Westminster Hall, must admit that Macaulay took a partial and, even a prejudiced view of some of the events, and those whose sympathies are with Hastings must often wish that an historian with the pen and powers of Macaulay would have written in defence of Hastings

"To some extent Clive's work was done once for all Hastings' work is still being tested, for he laid some of the foundations of our rule and traditions in India It was the work of a statesman and a scholar and his labours for research into the past history of Indian literature and religion were beyond praise "

According to the same writer, "The achievement of Warren Hastings in India is not to be estimated by the criteria usually applied to empire-builders—the number of battles won and enemies vanquished, the number of square miles of territory conqered and annexed, the plunder and the glory amassed His generals gained few battles, only the Rohillas and Chait Singh were vanquished, there were no conquests or trophies of victory, there was no plunder and little glory, all the superficial evidences of success were strikingly lacking To outward appearances he had done no more than justify his retention of his post and the trust, reposed in him, by bringing the Company safely through a great crisis with its territories intact and its resources unimpaired Actually, however, he had achieved immeasurably more and to estimate what that more was we have only to recall the extent of British power in India at the beginning of his administration, and to compare it with what it was at the end On the one hand, two weak footholds on the coast at Madras and Bombay, undisputed but undefined authority over the vast, chaotic, famine-stricken province of Bengal, a weak alliance with one native State, no friends, no security, bankrupt

finances, demoralized officers, incompetent leaders And on the other hand, an empire in being that had conclusively proved itself to be the most powerful State in India, an empire that was built on secure foundations, buttressed with treaties, and alliances, doubly strong because it had gained the respect and goodwill of no small part of the Indian world, and that only required a continuance of the same able, statesmanship to become the paramount power The contrast is a fah measure of Hastings' achievement "

According to J S Cotton, "Indians and Anglo-Indians alike venerate Hastings' name, the former as their first beneficent administrator, the latter the most able and the most enlightened of their own class If Clive's sword acquired the Indian empire, it was the brain of Hastings that planned the system of civil administration and his genius that saved the empire in its darkest hour " "Hastings made no conquest, but his subsidiary system paved the way for the final overthrow or defeat of every power that sought to hinder the growth of our Eastern empire "

According to another writer, Hastings applied unreservedly the energy, boldness, tenacity and resource which enabled him to grapple successfully with his enemies He may be described with justice as the Indian Pitt, the Chatham of the East

We may conclude with the following words of P E Roberts "Hastings was perhaps the greatest Englishman who ever ruled A man who with some, ethical defect possessed in a superabundant measure, the mobile and fertile brain, the tireless energy and the lofty fortitude which distinguishes only Ae supreme statesman "

*Pitt's India Act* (1784) This Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1784 It provided for a Board of

Control A kind of dual control was established from the Home Government This system continued up to 1858 This Pitt's India Act was changed in 1786 with a view to giving special powers to Lord Cornwallis

*Sir John Macpherson* (February 1785—September 1786) When Warren Hastings left India in 1785, Sir Macpherson, the senior member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General became the Governor-General of Bengal During the term of his office, the carried out many reforms, with a view to effecting economies in the expenditure of the Company At this time, Mahadji Scindia was very strong He got control over the Moghul emperor and was able to get from him the provinces of Agra and Delhi He demanded Chouth even from the English Company, but the same was refused Macpherson was relieved by Lord Cornwallis in 1786

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# British Rule in Maharashtra

**The first Anglo-Maratha War, 1775-1782**

The Marathas were one of the most self-respecting and courageous people of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries India Their king and later their leader called the Peshwa wielded great command over the whole Maratha population The third Battle of Panipath of 1761 damaged the power and prestige of the Marathas Thus the Maratha Confederacy, once the terror of the whole country was broken up in 1761 after the debacle at Panipath We find that after Panipath, three of its members, namely the Sindhia of Gwalior, the Gaekwar of Baroda and the Holkar of Indore still owned nominal allegiance to the Peshwa, while the Bhonsle of Nagpur openly declared his independence and ruled over most of territories comprising the central provinces and Orissa

But the lost glories of the Marathas were soon retrieved under the wings of the fourth Peshwa Madhav Rao I, who exerted profound influence in the Deccan by his successful warfare against the Nizam of Hyderabad and Haidar Ali of Mysore Not satisfied with his gains in the Deccan, he tried to recover his influence in north Indian also And so for that purpose the Peshwa in 1769 deputed his three lieutenants, namely Ram Chandra Ganesh, Mahadaji Sindhia and Tukoji Holkar They first settled the affairs of Malwa and afterwards dispersed in different directions Ram

Chandra went to Bundelkhand, the Sindhia to Udaipur ad the Holkar to Kotah and Bundhi After realising tributes in these places they opened communications with the Mughal Emperor, the Nawab of Oudh and Nazib-ud-Daulah, the dictator of Delhi The most startling exploit was, however, effected by Mahadaji Sindhia, who rose to the position of the practical ruler of Agra and Delhi and even kept under control Emperor Shah Alam by 1771

But the political pendulum began to swing in the opposite direction with the death of Peshwa Madhav Rao I's death narayan Rao became the fifth Peshwa But he succumbed to the intrigues of his uncle Raghunath Rao better known as Raghaba who was another aspirant for the Peshwaship The sudden death of Narayan Rao though brightened the prospect of Raghaba, the birth of posthumous son to Narayan Rao threw cold water on the hopes of Raghaba Driven by frustration and despair, Raghaba joined hands with the Bombay Government by signing the Treaty of Surat of 1775 to bet back the Peshawaship under the guns of the East India Company But his design was foiled by the army which proclaimed Madhav Rao Narayan the Peshwa in preference to Raghaba The shattered the prestige of the British so low that they had to enter into a humiliating Treaty of Wadgoan of 1779 It was now time for the Governor-General warren Hastings to turn his mind to the Marathas He declared war against the Marathas, who were forced to sign the Treaty of salbai of 1782 The war ended in a draw and the Treaty of Salbai assured mutual restitution of each other's territories and guaranteed peace for twenty years Although this war did not bring anything substantial to the East India Company, the advantage was that the war freed the English of any danger from the Marathas so that they could

tackle other problems like those of the Nizam and Oudh

**The Treaty of Salbai, 1783**

The First Anglo-Maratha war which had begun in 1775 was brought to a close by the Treaty of Salbai which was possible to a large extent through the instrumentality of Mahadaji Sindhia It was concluded between the east India Company and the Marathas in May 1782, and it was subsequently ratified by the Peshwa and the Governor-General The treaty made the following provisions

1 All paces including Bassein taken by the English during the war since the Treaty of purandhar would be delivered to the Peshwa

2 The island of Salsette and the smaller ones near Bombay would continue in the possession of the English

3 The city of Broach would similarly remain with the English

4 The territory conquered in Gujarat by the English would be restored to the Peshwa and the Gaekwar to whom they belonged

5 The English would not afford any support hereafter to Raghunath Rao, better known as Raghava in money or any other kind His place of residence was left of his choice and he would be entitled to monthly pension of twenty five thousands rupees would paid by the Peshwas

6 Fateh Singh Gaekwar would remain in possession of the territory he had before and would serve the Maratha state

7 The Peshwa agreed that haidar Ali would be made to relinquish the territory he had recently seized

8 The allies of the English and the Marathas were defined Both the contracting parties agreed not to molest other allies

9 The English were allowed to enjoy the privileges of trades as before

10 The East India Company and Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan agreed to accept Mahadaji Sindhia as the mutual guarantor for the proper observance of the terms and conditions of the treaty He was also given the power to crush the violator of the treaty

The treaty was ratified by the Governor-General Warren Hastings in June 1782 and by Fadnavis on 24 February 1783

The most striking features of the treaty were that the East India Company gave up the cause of Raghaba and recognised Madhav Rao Narayan as the Peshwa and returned to the Sindhia all his territories west of the Yamuna This treaty ensured peace for long twenty years between the English and the Marathas Being free from danger from the Marathas, the English could now tackle their other enemies like Tipu Sultan of Mysore

**The Second Anglo-Maratha War, 1803-1805**

The second phase of the struggle between England and the Marathas was ignited by the policy of Subsidiary Alliance engineered by the new Governor-General Lord Wellesley Not long after his arrival in India 1798 Wellesley was of the firm conviction that the best way of safeguarding the/ interest of England was to reduce the whole country into a military dependence on the East India Company He ceaselessly carried out his scheme and netted one native power after another But the Marathas were a heroic and self-respecting people

and so they point blank refused to be cowed down to submission to the Subsidiary Alliance Although superficially there was no conflict between the English and the Marathas, the latter began to gain in strength and prestige and in 1975 this was exhibited in a victory of the Marathas over the Nizam But the internal feuds and squabbles in the Maratha camp gave the company the much sought for opportunity The English prospect was further brightened with the death of Nana Fadnavis, the Chief Minister of Poona in March 1800 This wiped out the last chance of keeping the Maratha house in order This has been nicely couched in the words of Colonel Palmer, the British Resident at Poona "With him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha government" So long Nana Fadnavis held the filed, he could forsee the danger inherent in the Subsidiary Alliance and he elbowed out the mischievous design of Wellesley He could at the same time his master Baji Rao II into convenient vigilance Now he was free from the surveillance of the Nana to carry on his intrigues and counter intrigues and thereby he reduced the Maratha court into a hotbed of politics In order to ensure his own position as the Peshwa he kept on pitting one Maratha chief against another He at first favoured Daulat Rao Sindhia as against Jaswant Rao Holkar and practically became a puppet in the hands of the Sindhia On 12th April 1800 Wellesley advised the Resident at Poona to manage a secret treaty with Poona for turning out the Sindhia from the Deccan But the Peshwa remained unmoved, whereupon the Resident suggested that only "immediately destruction" would bring the Peshwa to his knees

But the Peshwa was caught in the coil of his own intrigues Matters came to a serious pass when in April 1801 Peshwa dastardly killed vituji the brother

of Jaswant Rao Holkar This made the Holkar rise in rebellion with a huge army against the Peshwa and in the encounter he completely mauled the combined military force of the Peshwa and the Sindhia at Hadispur on 25 October 1802 When the dusts were settled after the flight, the Holkar made Amrit Rao's son Vinayak Rao the Peshwa and exasperated Baji Rao made good escape to Bassein and had no hesitation to sign with the East India Company a treaty of "perpetual and general alliance" on 31 December 1802

**The Treaty of Bassein, 1802**

The Treaty of Bassein which was concluded between Peshwa Baji Rao II and the East India Company by which the Peshwa agreed to enter into a Subsidiary Alliance made the following provisions

1 An English force of six thousand soldiers was permanently stationed in the territory of the Peshwa

2 For the support of these troops, districts yielding twenty six lakh rupees as revenue were given to the Company

3 The Peshwa agreed not to enter into any treaty with not to make way on any other state without consulting the Company

4 The Peshwa agreed not to engage any European in the service of his state without the permission of the East India Company

5 The Peshwa's claim upon the Nizam and the Gaekwar were subject to the arbitration of the Company

6 The Peshwa renounced his claim over Surat

Baji Rao II was restored to the Peshwaship under the bandwagon of the East India Company It is

lamentable that the Peshwa in order to secure his own protection under the English guns surrendered the independence of his country

**The Third Anglo-Maratha War, 1817-1818**

When the East India Company followed a policy of non-intervention during the Governor-Generalship of Sir George Barlow (1805-1807) and Lord Minto (1807-1813) there was a considerable lull in the Anglo-Maratha front But with the arrival of Lord Hastings as the Governor-General in 1813 the East India Company renewed a vigorous and aggressive attitude towards the Marathas It is a pity that the breathing time created for the Marathas by the moderate and pacifist policy adopted by Barlow or Minto was not availed of by the Marathas to repair their house and rebuild a strong Maratha power On the other hand, the self-seeking designs on the part of the Maratha chiefs sapped their own foundation which was availed of by the new Governor-General Lord Hardings

When the Governor-General went to crust the Pindaris this hinged on molesting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Marathas and therefore, rebuffled the Peshwa and the Maratha chiefs Acting under a calculated design, the English foisted on humiliating treaty after another on the Raja of Nagpur on 27 May 1816, the Peshwa on 13 June 1817 and the Sindhia on 5 November 1817 The patience of the Peshwa came to a breaking point and he made a last bit to tear the shackles of the English And so Peshwa Baji Rao II declared war against the English Malhar Rao Holkar II, Appa Sahib of Nagpur and Daulat Rao Sindhia followed suit But the ill-equipped Maratha army could not hold the filed for long before the much superior army of the English The Peshwa was defeated at Khirki, the Sindhia's men were crushed at

Sitabadli and the Holkar's army was bottled out at Mahidpur It was a total rout for the Marathas

The English won a decisive victory and crushed the lion of the Marathas never to rise in future and the post of Peshwa was abolished for ever And Peshwa Baji Rao II was pensioned off with an annual payment of eight lakh rupees The Peshwa's possession in Poona and elsewhere were incorporated in the Bombay Presidency As for the Maratha chiefs, they were shorn of their territories and were put in a subordinate position to the East India Company Thus the Third Anglo-Maratha War meant the total destruction of the Maratha power As a matter of fact, it gave the English absolute authority more than that of Akbar and Aurangzeb It rung down the curtain over the Marathas as a political power in Indian history Thus the Maratha supremacy which lasted from 1707 to 1818 no doubt brought about the downfall of the Mughal empire, but before it could consolidate it's power, the English stepped in

**Downfall of the Maratha power**

The Marathas became a formidable power like the Afghans and the East India Company in the wake of the downfall and disintegration of the Mughal empire But like the Mughal empire the Marathas also waned and finally disintegrated into atoms Thus it is an important question-mark in history why and how such gigantic power disappeared from the Indian political scene The causes of the sunset of the Maratha power cannot have any single or simple explanation Various suggestions have been advances to explain this complex phenomenon

**Absence of strong administration**

In the first place was the absence of a corporate political set-up Even in their palmy days the Maratha

political life was a loose confederation under the leadership of the Chhatrapati and later on under the Peshwas We have notices that the Peshwa usurped the power and position of the Chhatrapati and the same spirit goaded the Maratha chiefs to arrogate to themselves the power and position of the Peshwas Thus the Maratha war-lords like the Sindhia, the Bhonsle, the Holkar and the Gaekwar succeeded in carving out semi-independent principalities for themselves and in doing so they showed scant respect to the authority of the Peshwa This fissiparous tendency was all the more evident with the break-up of the Maratha Confederacy in the wake of the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 Thus we find irreconcilable animosity between the Holkar and the Sindhia, while the Bhonsle dreamt for the kingship of the entire Maratha empire It is a common phenomenon that very often one Maratha chief sided with an outsider to the serious prejudice of the national interest Thus it was the mutual jealousy among the Maratha chieftains that stood in the way of national unity Thus we find that the absence of a corporate spirit among the Marathas sapped their foundation This has been rightly said by Dr V V S Khare "The Marathas did not possess any national sentiment The internal jealousy and selfish treachery among them triumphed over the public interest While individually the Marathas were clever and brave, they lacked the corporate spirit so essential for national independence " In this connection Dr S N Sen rightly observed "The empire was based, not upon confidence, but jealously, and incapable of a comprehensive policy of national patriotism "

So we find that the Maratha state was getting converted from an organic whole into an inorganic mass and ultimate into a loose confederatory of

ambitious feudal chiefs The result was that Peshwas began to become the powerless head to the Maratha Confederacy Thus the new nobility like the Sindhias, the Holkars, the Rastes, the Phadkes, the Patwardhans, the Bundelas and the Purandares, began to think themselves as independent rulers of their own principalities The internal stress also sapped the foundation of the Maratha 'polity' Thus the conflict between Nana Fadnavis and the House of Sindhia, between the Peshwa and the Chatrapatis of Satara and Kolhapur, between Daulat Rao Sindhia and Yashwant Rao Holkar, between Malhar Rao Holkar II and Kashi Rao Holkar, between Parsoji, Baka Bai and Appa Sahib, between Tulsa Bai and Ram Din and between Anand Rao Gaekwar and Kanjoji Gaekwar are some of such suicidal schizophrenia

Nationalism was wanting in the Maratha system which was rather basically feudal in character The army was harassing the entire population As the chiefs failed to protect them from the hands of the army, the peasants naturally turned towards anyone for protection As the Maratha Government was not concerned with their own subjects, the people in their turn lost all interest in the continuance of the Government Thus the state machinery of the Marathas was artificial as opposed to organic The Government, therefore, had a precarious existence Under such a system it is but a natural that the chiefs of the Marathas could not rise to the occasion by burying their hatchet or sinking their differences

**Lack of unity**

In the second place was the inherent defect in the character of the Maratha state The Maratha state had never shown any concern for communal harmony, unity and integrity if the country, not to speak of any

other welfare measures like the spread of education Thus the Marathas state had no genuine bond of cohesion Only an artificial tie stuck the Marathas loosely

The disastrous defeat of the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 had crushed their backbone and they could not exhibit a united front any longer It is true that the Peshwa still commanded some power and influence, but he had little control over the forces of disintegration and destabilisation after Panipat The process of destabilisation was further escalated after the Treaty of Bassein, by which Peshwa Baji Rao II purchased the tutelage of the East India Company The medieval system of statecraft which was bent upon the expansion of territorial frontiers could hardly compete with the East India Company

Like the Holy Roman Empire the Maratha state was, "a curious and baffling political puzzle" Dr S N Sen wrote "The whole Maratha Constitution was a curious combination of democracy and feudal autocracy In fact, no single term of political philosophy can be applied to it Unable to call it a monarchy, aristocracy or democracy, Tone calls it a military republic "According to S M Edwards "Indeed the constitution of the Maratha Government and army was most calculated to destroy than to create an empire, and the spirit which directed their external policy and their internal administration prevented all chances of permanent of the country over which they claimed sovereign rights " Its entire structure was neither solid nor national The cross purposes at work ate out its vitals and the state was degenerated into internal convulsions Sahu II who was the Chhatrapati or Satara was a palace prisoner who was considered a costly appendage by the Peshwa Chhatra Singh who

was the brother of Sahu II denounced the wretched condition to which the Raja had been reduced Both the brothers were anxious to free themselves from the thralldom of the Peshwa and to rejuvenate the Maratha state by bringing about the cohesion of the several members of the state They overpowered the Peshwa's Managers, namely Apte and Abhyankar at Satara in March 1798 Sahu II and Chhatra Singh were joined by Shivaji III, the Chtrapati of Kolhapur, his redoubtable Minister Ratnakar Pant and the widows of Mahadaji Sindhia In the hands of their combined army Madhav Rao Raste, the Commander of Peshwa was defeated on 16 June 1798 The civil war ended in the fall of Chhtrapati of Kolhapur who took refuge in Panhala Lord Wellesley kept close his longing eyes on these domestic entanglements and distractions in the Maratha state

***Economic stability***

In the third place was the absence of a stable economic policy of the Marathas The Maratha economy was rather sluggish During their war with with the great Mughals, the Marathas had no settled life and so they gave up agriculture and became soldiers of fortunes They took to a life of fighting and plundering the Mughal provinces like Gujarat, Malwa and Bundelkhand In return of the military services they were not given cash but lands instead This was a most glaring system in the Maratha economic life According to Dr V V S Khare "The pernicious system of allowing lands in lieu of pay for military service proved ruinous " Again, during the days of the early Peshwas a major income of the state was the collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the adjoining lands of Mughal empire Thus the state was fed not by its own revenue but by the forcible collection of some unquestionable taxes from other's hand The most

tragic aspect of its was that when the Maratha state reached the same of expansion, the system of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi ceased and this heavily told upon the national economy To make matters worse, a terrible famine descended on the Deccan like pillars of fire and took a heavy toll of lives It had such a disastrous effect upon the Maratha economy that many princes had to mortgage their land to the bankers for loans There was also no industry or foreign trade to subsist the nation Thus the absence of a national economic policy was a major factor in the fall of the Marathas

The Marathas administration lacked in economic stability Agriculture which was the life-line of the national economy rested on the whims of rainfall Industry was negligible and commerce was harassing The state was exposed to the evils of feudalism There was no proper accounts of the state revenue The black money of Nana Fadnavis amounted to seven crore rupees The agrarian system was so mismanaged that the Maratha chiefs had to recourse to plunders of their own lands for the maintenance of their troops, because Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, he two main sources of revenue were rather elastic and undependable An the Maratha chiefs were hard up for money and therefore had to borrow from the creditors At times they had to take loan by mortgaging the future revenues of their territories Since the soldiers could not be paid regularly they staged demonstration against their employers Thus Daulat Rao Sindhia faced with severe financial crisis had to rely on rich moneylenders and bankers His unpaid soldiers staged demonstration before the Battle of Assaye The fort of Asirgarh was surrendered by its keepers on consideration of cash from Arthur Wellesley, with which they cleared the arrears of the garrison that had gone into seven lakh

rupees Yet, Daulat Rao relentlessly hided his privy purse of fifty lakh rupees

**Indisciplined Army**

In the fourth place was the ill-organised, ill-disciplined and ill-equipped army of the Marathas Emphasis was on pomp and display, while there was total laxity in discipline The Maratha chiefs were addicted to dancing girls, tiger-hunting and even kite-flying Thus Elphinstone described the Maratha army as a "loose and struggling mass of camel, elephants, bullocks, nautch-girls, flakers and bafoons, lacemen and matchlockmen, banyans and mootasuddis " The Marathas also neglected artillery as a main plank of defence and they also lacked in the skill of playing long-range guns and galloper guns There was never a coordinated action in the Maratha army between the cavalry, infantry and the advance of artillery in close support of the moving infantry The Marathas did not maintain an efficient cavalry with the lone exception of sixty thousand horsemen at the command of Yaswant Rao Holkar The Maratha cavalry was of use for the purpose of light raids only and it was not trained to strike "shock attack "

The composition of the Marathas army lacked in homogeneity It comprised the Arabs, the Sikhs, the Rajputs, the Sindhis, the Rohillas, the Abyssinians, the Pathans and even Europeans Thus the Marathas made a strategic folly by relying on the foreign soldiers for the defence of their country Again, the Marathas made a mistake by giving up their traditional guerrilla warfare which was the key to the success of the Marathas against the Mughals The Marathas could fill up the gap by taking to modern war techniques either As a matter of fact, in point of military technique the Marathas were outclassed by the

English No doubt, the Marathas are known for their courage and war-like spirit, their military system was outmoded and obsolete in the modern context Since the Marathas were mercenary soldiers they fought a war only for personal gains and not for any national interest so much so that loss of one battle for them was nothing more than loss of a job The Marathas by giving up their traditional guerrilla warfare and by laying emphasis on infantry and elephant and at the same time by not carrying effective artillery brought their own doom So Dr V V S Khare rightly said "The Marathas neglected to develop artillery as the main support of defence " As a matter of fact, the marathas were not aware of the superior western expertise and know-how in military technology

***Poor Diplomacy***

In the fifth place was the poor diplomacy of the Maratha which was no match for the English diplomatic in-put As a matter of fact, the Maratha were outdistanced by their English adversary in diplomacy No doubt the Maratha statecraft believed in diplomatic finesse and intrigues, but that diplomacy was playing a waiting game, base treacheries and selfish intrigues which were rather crude and primitive On the other hand, the English diplomacy was bent upon winning over a section of the opponents and isolation of the potential chieftains the opposite camp It is said that Lord Hastings and Elphinstone kept strict observation over the despatches of the Peshwas and that were was hardly any chief in the Peshwa's services who had not been won over by the English money

***Casteism***

Another serious flaw that plagued the social life was casteism No wonder the caste jealousy played a big

role in the friction between the Angrias and the Peshwas As the government leaned towards the Brahmins it imposed a heavy financial burden on the administration In the words of M G Ranade "The infusion of the racial and caste elements among the military leaders of the nation was the most distinguishing mark of the latter half of the century Ramdas's high ideal was lowered and the usual consequences followed, such as decadence of virtues " It was, therefore, no fault on the part of the English to take a superficial view that the Maratha Government was "after all a Brahman Raj " We may conclude with the words of Dr S N Qanungo "The tragedy of the Maratha power was the inevitable result of a nascent, formidable and aggressive British imperialism bursting upon a sleepy, inert and medieval society The Maratha chiefs lived in the lengthening shadows of the medieval feudalism without any idea of the sweeping changes that were then taking place in the Western world "

# 50

# Annexation of Sind

With humble beginnings in trade the English power had been expanded by arms and diplomacy and the glittering bubble must expand, or it will burst The cupidity of the Directors, the ambition or avarice of their agents in India coupled with the Englishman's insolence of superiority and the inherent craving for aggradisment made collision with the Indian princes inevitable, and conquest a corollary of that collision The same logic of events which brought the rest of India under British rule, operated in the case of Sind also

Sind in the eighteenth century was ruled by the Kallora chiefs In 1771 a Baluchi tribe of the Talpuras descended from the hills and settled in the plains of Sind Hardy men and excellent soldiers, very soon the Talpuras acquired great influence and usurped power In 1783 Mir Fateh Ali Khan, the leader of the Talpuras, established complete hold over Sind and the Kallora prince was exiled Mir Fateh Ali Khan who claimed a vague suzerainty over Sind was confirmed in his dominions by the Durrani monarch and forced to share the country with his brothers When he died in 1800, those brothers, popularly known as 'Char Yar' divided the kingdom among themselves, calling themselves the Amirs or Lords of Sind Soon after these Amirs extended their dominion on all sides, took Amarkot from the Raja of Jodhpur, Karachi from the chief of Luz, Shikarpur and Bukkar from the Afghans

As early as 1775 the East India Company had established a factory at Thatta, then a town of considerable commercial importance, but it had to be abandoned in 1792 because of fiscal impositions and the prevailing political unrest Fear of French designs prompted Lord Minto to send British mission to Kabul, Persia, Lahore and Sind A treaty of 'eternal friendship' was signed with the Amirs in 1809 providing for mutual intercourse through envoys and the Amirs promised not to allow the French to settle in Sind The treaty was renewed in 1820 with the additional article which excluded the Americans from Sind It also settled border disputes between the two parties on the side of Cutch where the Company's frontier and the frontiers of Sind met Soon after the commercial and navigational value of the Indus attracted the attention of the Company's authorities It was in pursuance of commercial motives that in 1831 Sir Alexander Burnes, under orders from Lord Ellenborough, then President of the Board of Control, was sent for the exploration of the Indus under pretence of carrying presents to Ranjit Singh at Lahore

The Baluchis could scent the game of the English When Burnes first entered the Indus, a Baluchi soldier said "The mischief is done, you have seen our country" A Seiad commented "Alas! Sind is now gone since the English have seen the river which is the high road to its conquest"

**The new Commercial Treaty**

in 1832 William Bentick sent Colonel Pottinger to Sind to sign a new commercial treaty with the Amirs Simultaneously Lieutenant Del Host was sent to survey the course of the Lower Indus Pottinger signed a treaty with the Amirs of Sind on the following terms

1 A free passage for English travellers and merchant through Sind, and the use of the Indus for commercial pursuits, but no vessel of war to come by the said river nor military stores to be conveyed by the above river or roads of Sind

2 No English merchant was to settle in Sind, and travellers and visitors were required to have passports

3 Tariff rates were to be announced and no military dues or to demanded The Amirs agreed to alter the tariff rates, if found too high

4 The Amirs agreed to put down, in concert with the Raja of Jodhpur, the border robbers of Cutch

5 The old treaties of friendship were confirmed and the contracting parties agreed not to look with the eye of covetousness on the possessions of one another

The details of tariff rates were settled by a supplementary treaty of 1834 Colonel Pottinger was stationed as Company's Political Agent in Sind Soon the Company put up a claim for a share in the tolls collected at the mouth of the Indus

The designs of Ranjit Singh on Sind provided the East India Company with an excuse to throw a cordon round Sind At the Rupar meeting between Ranjit Singh and William Bentick (1831), the latter refused to discuss any proposal for the partition of Sind Lord Auckland looked upon Sind from the larger problem of the defence of India against Russian designs To counter Russian plans Auckland wanted to obtain a counteracting influence over the Afghans Ranjit Singh was too powerful to be coerced in the furtherance of this plan However, the weakness of the Amirs of Sind offered too tempting a reward to be missed Thus,

consolidation of British influence in Sind was considered a necessary preliminary to plans on Afghanistan

Ranjit Singh had taken Rojhan, a town on the Sind frontier, and at one time even mediated a regular invasion of Sind The Company seized this moment to offer protection to the Amirs Pottinger was sent to Hyderabad to negotiate a new treaty offering British protection on the condition of the Amir accepting the Company's troops in his capital to be maintained at the cost of the Amir or alternatively promise British mediation in return for concessions The Amirs neither desired nor asked for foreign aid and told pottinger "We have vanquished the Sikhs, and we will do so again" Pottinger then told the Amirs that Ranjit Singh would be let loose, perhaps aided, to pursue his designs on Sind Reluctantly the Amirs agreed to a treaty in 1838 by which the Amirs accepted the Company's mediation in their dispute with the Sikhs, and secondly, accepted a British Resident at Hyderabad, who could move freely anywhere he liked escorted by British troops Thus, the Amirs virtually passed under British protection Lieutenant General Sir W F P Napier write "This treaty by which a loaded shell was placed in the palace of the Ameers to explode at pleasure for their destruction, was abstractedly, an unjust oppressive action " P E Roberts writes "Under Auckland and his cabinet of secretaries British policy in India had fallen to a lower level of unscrupulousness than ever before, and the plain fact is that the treatment of Sind from this time onward, however expedient politically, was morally indefensible "

**Tripartite Treaty**

To effectively solve the Afghan problem, the Company

brought round the Sikh ruler to the signing of a Tripartite Treaty in June 1838 By this treaty Ranjit Singh accepted British mediation for this dispute with the Amirs, and Shah Shuja agreed to relinquish his sovereign rights on Sind on condition of receiving the arrears of tribute The exact amount of the tribute was to be determined by the Company The main object to this machinery was to obtain finances for the Afghan adventure and obtain so much of the Amirs' territory as would secure a line of operations against Afghanistan through Sind Casting all scruples to the wind, Colonel Pottinger was sent with the draft of a treaty to the Amirs with the direction to persuade or compel the Amirs to pay the money and also consent to the abrogation of that article of the Treaty of 1832 which concerned the non-conveyance of military stores through the roads and rivers of Sind The Amirs produced declaratory articles showing that Shah Shuja himself had exempted them from all claims in 1833 The Amirs told Pottinger "It is a joke to call it a demand from the Kind You have given him bread for the last five and twenty years, and any strength he has now or may have hereafter is from you The demand is yours " Colonel Pottinger, however, told the Amirs that the British had "the ready power to crush and annihilate them, the will to call it into action, if it appeared requisite, however, remotely, for the safety or integrity of the Anglo-Indian empire the frontier " Under threat of superior force, the Amirs accepted a treaty in February 1839 by which a British subsidiary force was to be stationed at Shikarpur and Bukkar and the Amirs of Sind were to pay rupees three lakhs annually for the maintenance of the Company's troops Further, the Amirs were not to have any negotiations with foreign State without the knowledge of the Company's government, to provide store-room at Karachi for military supplies, to abolish all tools on

the Indus and to furnish an auxiliary force for the Afghan war if called upon to do so The British Government in return pledged itself not to meddle with the internal rule of the Amirs either generally or in respect of their separate possessions and to protect them from foreign aggression Even when the negotiations were going on, the Company's troops captured Karachi and retained it, regardless 'who objected, immediately and finally gave way, by fixing their seals to the revised documents'

During the Afghan war, the Amirs Sind, in the words of T Archbold," found themselves saddled with the general liability to help the British forces, part of their territory had been taken from them obviously for ever, they had to contribute in varying proportions a large amount of money, instead of the old tribute, in order to maintain troops in their midst whom they did not want, and their independent position was gone for ever, because they had now come definitely within the sphere of British influence" Even then the Amirs faithfully carried out the terms of the treaties imposed on them, but instead of getting reward for their fidelity they were charged with hostility and disaffection against the British Government

Lord Ellenborough succeeded Auckland as Governor-General in 1842 In his dealing with the Amirs of Sind, the new Governor-General proved to be even more unscrupulous than Lord Auckland According to V A Smith," Ellenborough was eager to find a pretext for the annexation of hat country, and it was not long before his search was rewarded he deliberately provoked a war in order that he might annex the province the desire to obtain control of the great waterway seems to have been the leading motive of the annexations in the time of Lord Auckland as

well as that of Lord Ellenborough" Ellenborough laboured hard to regain the prestige of the English which had suffered during the Afghan war In justification of his policy, he wrote to the Duke of Wellington "The Amirs, too, had been strangely misled as to the real circumstances under which we retire from Afghanistan They believed us beaten"

**Importance of Trip**

it is undoubtedly the shortest-that of the sword Oh, I how wish you had drawn it in a better cause The Times of London described the whole business "rotten throughout" The *Bombay Times* wrote "Alas! that this man bears the name of Englishman Alas! that he is born in the glorious age of Wellington, which he disgraces" Henry Lawrence wrote "I do not think that Government can do better than restore it to the Amirs " Even the conqueror of Sind, Napier himself was not convinced of the righteousness of annexation In his diary he noted "We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality it will be" Robert Peel, the Prime Minister of England, described the conquest as full off 'precipitate and unjust proceedings which would discredit the 'name and character' of the British authorities Though convinced of the unjustness of the annexation of Sind, the Home authorities did not reverse the decision of the Government of India Mr Gladstone, the Liberal leader, said some years later that "the mischief of retaining was less than the mischief of abandoning Sind"

Historian Innes wrote that the case for annexation of Sind was more or less deliberately manufactured, while Edward Thorton believed the annexation to have been effected without 'far pretence', and that the Amirs of Sind" owed us nothing, and they had inflicted

on us no injury, but it suited our policy to reduce them to vassalage and they were this reduced" Ramasay Muir is equally pointed in his criticism when he writes "Sind is the only British acquisition in India of which it may fairly be said that it was not necessitated by circumstances, and that it was therefore an act of aggression"

Percival Spear, a modern apologist of British imperialism, regards penetration of Western influences synonymous with British imperial expansion in India, he labels the annexation of Sind as 'the least creditable' and 'facist' but argues that Sind could not for ever remain isolated from the world and, adds further, that it was not in her own best interest that she should do so

Charles Napier believed that the Sindian war was no isolated event, but " the tail of the Afghan storm" P E Roberts elaborate the same view when he writes "The conquest of Sind followed in the wake of the Afghan war and was morally and politically its sequel" The unattractive and barren land of Sind assumed great importance for the Company's authorities because of its strategic value in building up the defence of India against possible Russo-Persian designs on India In a letter to the British Resident, Pottinger, on July 26, 1838, Lord Auckland wrote "You will in the first place state to the Amirs that, in the opinion of the Governor-General, a crisis has arrived at which it is essentially requisite for the security of British to its interest, and you will further apprise them that a combination of the Powers to the Westward, apparently have objects in view calculated to be counter-combination for the purpose of frustrating those objects"

Perhaps it was inexpedient and unjust to invade

Afghanistan, but that invasion in the eyes of Ellenborough and many English made it expedient, though unjust, to coerce the Amirs of Sind Ranjit Singh would not give a passage through the Punjab to the company's army of invasion of Afghanistan The weakness and richness of the Amirs of Sind offered of advantages which the unscrupulous Government of Auckland would not overlook Thus, the Amirs were coerced to provide finance for the Afghan adventure and also military and other facilities in their territories or the passage of the Company's troops Treaty after Treaty was forced on the Amirs to meet the changing Afghan situation The failure of the Afghan adventure put the Government of India under the necessity of increasing vigilance about the frontier problem Thus, it was found inexpedient to abandon the military cantonments of Khairpur, Bukkar, Sukkar and Karachi Lord Ellenborough wrote to the Duke of Wellington on 22 March 1843 "I hardly known how I could have accomplished the object of retaining possession of a commanding position upon the Lower Indus without a breach with the Amirs We could hardly have justified our remaining at Karachi, we could not have justified our remaining at Bukkar, after the termination of the war with Afghanistan without a new treaty " Moreover, the British prestige had greatly suffered, In India there was universal despondency and such a great terror of the Afghans that it was scarcely possible to find resources for remittance to the British Generals in Afghanistan There were stirrings at Gwalior and Saugor and spreading unrest in the whole of Bundelkhand Some madras regiments were on the verge of mutiny In short, the fear of England's power and belief in her invicibility had been shaken To demonstrate England's strength and to re-establish her prestige, Ellenborough sanctioned the conquest of Sind

Elphinstone has rather bluntly put it "Coming from Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who has been knocked in the street and went home to bear his wife in revenge"

***The region of Ranjit Singh***

Ahmad Shah Abdali claimed the Punjab as a part of his domination although his governors exercised hardly any other function of government except collection of revenue The successors of Ahmad Shah could not kept control over the Punjab and the province became a 'no man's land' These political conditions were conductive to the rise to power to Sikh misls under sikh chieftains which held extensive territories in the Punjab The important misls numbered twelve and one of these was the *Sukarchakyia* misls controlled the territory between the Ravi and Chenab

Ranjit Singh was born at Gujranwala on 2 November 1780 in the house of Mahan Singh, the leader of *Sukarchakyia* misl His father died when Ranjit Singh was a mere boy of 12 Ranjit Singh like Akbar showed an early grasp of political affairs From 1792 to 1797 a Council of Regency consisting of Ranjit's mother, his mother in-law and Diwan Lakhpat Rai controlled the actual affairs of the misl In 1979 Ranjit Singh overthrew the Regency and took over the actual administration in his hands

When Ranjit Singh assumed leadership of the *Sukarchakyias*, his authority extended over a few district of the Rachna and the Chaj Doab North of Sutlej the Bhangi misl was the most powerful and controlled extensive areas from the Jhelum and then down the river besides the actual control of Lahore and Amristar Another important misl was of the Kanheyas which ruled over the territories north to Amristar The Ahluwalia misl controlled the Jullundur

Doab South of the river Sutlej the Phulkain chief of Patiala, Nabha, Kaithal ruled over scattered territories extending from the Sutlej to the Jamuna Afghan chiefs who usurped the authority of the Kabul Government ruled over Kasur, Multan, Attock, Peswar, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Kashmir etc Zaman Shah the grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali, considered himself the rightful ruler of the Punjab ad led a number of invasions to assert his authority

Luckily for Ranjit Singh, the important misls were in a state of disintegration towards the close of the eighteenth century The struggle for power politics also engulfed Afghanistan in a civil war from which the country did not recover for three decades Ranjit Singh fully exploited the political situation to his advantage and by following a ruthless policy of 'blood and iron' carved out for himself a kingdom in the central Punjab

In returned for the service rendered to Zaman Shah Abdali during the latter's invasion of Punjab, the Afghan ruler authorized Ranjit Singh to occupy Lahore and rule it on behalf of the Afghan suzerain Ranjit Singh to occupy Lahore and rule it on behalf of the Afghan suzerain Ranjit Singh lost no time in ousting the Bhangi sirdars from Lahore, which he occupied in 1799 The occupation of Lahore considerably enhanced the prestige of Ranjit Singh Emboldened, Ranjit Sing snatched Amristar from the Bhangis in 1805 the control of Lahore and Amristar put Ranjit Singh in the forefront of the political life of the Punjab The following few years saw the establishment of his authority over the entire territory from the Sutlej to the Jhelum Latif sums up the process thus "The old Sikh confederacies had either all been swept away by his systematic usurpations and grasping policy or like the Phulkians and the Nihangs had sought he

protection of a power greater than his by settling east of the Sutlej The Kanhayia, Ramgarhia and Ahluwalia Misls ranged themselves under his banner and took pride in following him to the battlefield"

Ranjit Singh's great desire was to become the ruler of the entire Sikh people and with that objective in view he wanted to bring the Cis-Sutlej territories under his control To achieve that objective the Maharaja organised three expeditions In 1806 he marched an army 20,000 men and advanced up to Patiala He captured Doladhi and exacted tribute from Sahib Singh of Patiala On his way back he conquered Ludhiana, Dakha, Raikot, Jagraon and Ghumgrana Next year the Maharaja again crossed the river Sutlej and successfully arbitrated in the dispute between the Raja of a warm welcome and offered rich presents The Maharaja on his return journey exacted tribute from the Rajas of Kaithal, Kalsia besides conquering Naraingarth, Wadni, Zira, Kot Kapura and other territories The Sikh chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej states felt the heavy hand of Jhind, Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal and Sardar Chen Singh, the Diwan of Patiala, waited on a deputation of Mr Seton, the British Resident at Delhi The same year the ruler of Lahore to give up all claims on the Cis-Sutlej states Undaunted, the Maharaja again crossed the Sutlej in 1808 and captured Faridkot, Malerkotla, and Ambala By the Treaty of Amritsar, however Ranjit Singh accepted the East India Company's greater right over the Cis-Sutlej territories

***Relations with the British***

Ranjit Singh's ambition to acquire the Cis-Sutlej territories brought him face to face with another expanding power in the Indian sub-continent, the English East India Company As early as 1800, the

English, fearing an Afghan invasion of India under Zaman shah, has sent Munshi Yusaf Ali to the court of Ranjit Singh with the request that the Maharaja should not join Zaman Shah in case he invaded India In 18055 Jaswant Rao Holkar hotly pursued by Lord Lake came to Amritsar and solicited Ranjit Singh to make a common cause against the English Ranjit Singh at the time was busy in his plans hostility of the English The Maharaja read selfish motives in Holkar's moves and would have nothing to do with him, he rather, described Holkar's as a pukka huramzada On January 1, 1806 Ranjit Singh a treaty of friendship with in turn, promised that the English would never form any plans for the seizure and sequest-ration of Ranjit Singh's possessions and property

Alarmed by the prospect of joint Franco-Russian invasion of Indian in 1807 Lord Minto, the Governor-General sent Charles Metcalfe to Lahore to negotiate a friendly treaty with Ranjit Singh The Maharaja offered to accept Metcalfe's proposal of an offensive and defensive alliance on the condition that the English would remain neutral in case of a Sikh-Afghan war and would recognise him the sovereign of the entire Punjab including the Malwa territories The negotiations did not fructify because Charles Metcalfe was not authorised by his Government to recognise the Maharaja's plans on Cis-Sutlej states Meantime the Napoleonic danger somewhat receded and the English attitude stiffened The English Commander David Ochterlony made a show of force, marched an array to Ludhiana and finally in February 1809 issued a Proclamation declaring "the Cis-Sutlej states to be under British protection, and the any aggressions of the chief of Lahore would be resisted with arms" Fearing that the jealous Punjab chiefs might not transfer their allegiance to the British, the Maharaja

agreed to sign the Treaty to Amristar with the Company on the following terms

***Treaty of Amristar***

1 "Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British Government and the state of Lahore, the former shall be considered, with respect to the later, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Raja to the northward of the river sutlej

2 "The Raja will not maintain in the territory which he occupies on the left bank of the river Sutlej more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of that territory nor commit or suffer any encroachments on the possessions or rights of the chiefs in its vicinity

3 "In the event of violent of any of the preceding articles, or a departure from the rules of friendship, this treaty shall be considered null and void"

The Treaty of Amristar was important for its immediate as well as potential effects In its immediate effects it checked one of the most cherished ambitions of Ranjit Singh to extend his rule over the entire Sikh nation, living east or west of the river Sutlej By accepting the river Sutlej as the boundary line for his dominions and the Company's, the Maharaja compromised his cherished political ideal besides suffering territorial and economic losses Accounting to Cunningham the treaty with the Company gave Ranjit Singh care blanche so far as the region to the west of Sutlej was concerned, with the disappearance of all danger, for the time being form the English the Maharaja directed his energies

towards the west and capture Multan, Kashmir and Peshwar In its ultimate effects the treaty showed the weal position of Ranjit Singh vis-a-vis the Company The British were brought close to the frontier of the Lahore Kingdom and this brought the danger of war nearer Besides, the treaty gave the Company a degree of control over Ranjit Singh's relations with the neighboring states of Sind, Bahawalpur and Afghanistan

The relations from 1809 to 1839 clearly indicate the weak position of the Maharaja The Company forestalled the moves of Ranjit Singh on Sind In 1831 Alexander Burnes was sent to the Court of Lahore Burnes travelled via Sind to Lahore In October 1831, William Bentinck met Ranjit Singh at Rupar and both parties professed friendship for each other William Bentinck Rejected all proposals of the Maharaja for the partition of Sind At the time the Rupar meeting was being held, Colonel Pottinger, the British Agent in Sind, concluded a commercial treaty with the Amir of Hyderabad and the Maharaja was told that the treaty was of a purely commercials nature Ranjit Singh could see the British game, but was not prepared for a showdown with the Company Thus, Ranjit Singh was checked Asia led the English to occupy and later build a cantonment at Ferozepur in 1835 The stationing of British troops at the strategic town worried Ranjit Singh but his protests went unheeded

To thwart Russian intrigues in Afghanistan, the Company decided to remove from the throne of Kabul Dost Mohammad, the unfriendly Amir of Afghanistan, and instead put Shah Shuja as the ruler Ranjit Singh was asked to join in the project The Maharaja himself was indifferent to the Russian danger, rather he feared British designs and encirclement of his territories However, the threats of the British Agent,

Macnaghten, that the expedition would be undertaken whether Ranjit Sigh joined or nor brought Ranjit Singh round to the signing of the Tripartite Treaty of June 26, 1838 the Maharaja, however, refused to give passage to the British army through his territories However the threats of the British Agent, Macnghten, that the expedition would be undertaken whether of the British Agent, Macnaghten, that the expedition would be undertaken whether Ranjit Singh joined or not brought Ranjit Singh round to the signing of the Tripartite Treaty on June 26, 1838 The Maharaja, however, refused to give passage to the British army through his territories

Ranjit Singh's relations with the English Company were characterized by an inferiority complex The rising tide of British imperialism posed a serious threat to the Maharaja's dominations The Maharaja was conscious of his weak position, but took no steps to organise a coalition of Indian princes or maintain a balance of power in the country He just postponed the evil day by grudgingly yielding at every step He proved to be a poor statesman is this respect N K Sinha writes "in the last decade of his career Ranjit Singh is a pathetic figure, helpless and inert He feared to expose the kingdom he had created to the risk of war and chose instead the policy of yielding, yielding and yielding"

Notwithstanding Ranjit Singh's great personal achievements, he failed to found a stable Sikh state in the Punjab He was a despot and established military rule in the Punjab As is usually the case with one man's rule, after Ranjit Singh's death the military set-up exploded in fierce but fading flames and in the process was consumed the edifice of the Sikh state so assiduously built by Ranjit Singh Ranjit Singh's death caused not a vacancy but a void and the entire

structure was submerged Anarchy and confusion reigned supreme and gradually all real power passed in to the hands of the Khalsa army Ranjit singh had left a large standing army of 40,000 soldiers which proved to be a great drain on the resource of the state Within five years of Ranjit Singh's death the strength of the army increased three-fold and it became an unbearable burden on the shrinking resources of the state When the soldiers could not be paid their salaries, they got out of control, frequently interfered in politics and bargained with rival royal claimants for salary increases The soldiers formed their own Panchayats and decided whether or not to proceed on particular expeditions irrespective of what the civil authority ordered The army everywhere got the upper hand, assumed the role of 'king-makers' and eclipsed the Civil, authority Besides, the powerful rival factions and jealous jagirdars held in check by the strong hand of Ranjit Singh got out of control and converted the Punjab in to a vertical arena for power politics The incompetent and worthless sons of Ranjit Singh, the legitimacy of many of whom was doubtful, could not check the rising forces of disorder A modern critic ably sums up the position thus, "They were the brains behind the intrigues, the army was the power, and claimants to the throne were the pawn" The history of the Punjab in the years following the death of Ranjit Singh was thus the history of plots and counter-plots, murders and assassinations, desertions and treachery-all undermining the very stability of the state

Ranjit Singh suddenly died of a paralytic stoke in June 1839 He was succeeded by his imbecile son, Kharak Singh Dhian Singh continued to hold the post of Wazir the new Maharaja was an opium-eater and an unworthy ruler Soon the powerful cliques of the

Sindhanwalia sirdars Atar Singh, Lehna Singh and their nephew Ajit Singh) and the Dogra brothers brought anarchy and confusion to the Punjab Chet Singh, a favourite of the Maharaja, was murdered by Wazir Dhian Singh's hirelings on 8 October 1839 in the his son Naonihal Singh proclaimed the Maharaja with Dhian Singh as the Wazir Perhaps Naonihal Singh was the ablest among Ranjit Singh's successors He restored law and order in the state, sent an army to reduce the hill states of Mandi and Suket, captured Ladakh and parts of Baltistan and kept a strict watch on the activities of the jealous English Fortune, however, did not spare him long for the Punjab On November 5, 1840, Kharak Singh died in prison and reign of Naonihal Singh ended the same day Returning home from cemetery after performing the funeral rites of his father, the youthful prince was grievously hurt by the fall of an archway of the Lahore fort Naonihal Singh did not survive the accident

After the death of Naonihal Singh, Dogras and the Sindhhanwalias assumed the role of 'king-makers', espoused the cause of rival claimants and enlisted the support of the army by promises of increased salaries to the soldiers the Sindhanwalias supported the claims of Mai Chan Kaur, the mother of Naonihal Singh who wanted to govern as regent on behalf of the expected child of her deceased son, Naonihal Singh The Dogras successful with the help of the Sikh army and was proclaimed the Maharaja in January 1841 Dogra Dhian Singh became the Wazir and the Sindhanwalia Sirdars, recalled them and showered great favours on them In September 1843 Ajit Singh Sindhanwalia treacherously shot dead the Maharaja of the army by promises of increased salaries ad avenged the death of his father by putting to death Singhanwalia Sirdards, Lehna Singh and Ajit Singh

In September 1843 Dalip Singh, a minor son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was proclaimed the Maharaja with Rani Jindan as regent and Hira Singh Dogras as Wazir December 1844 The new Wazir, Jawahar Singh, the brother of Rani Indian, soon incurred the displeasure of the army and was deposed and put to death, September 18455 Lal Singh, a lover of Rani Jindan won over the army to his side and became the Wazir in September 1845 Teja Singh was the new Commander of the forces

***The first Anglo-Sikh War, 1845-46***

The English were closely watching the happenings in the Punjab and cast longing eyes on the fertile plains on the other side of the Sutlej As early as May 1838 W G Osborne has written "One course to purse on Ranjit Singh's death is the instant occupation of the Punjab by an overwhelming force and the establishment of our north western frontier on the Indus The East India Company has swallowed too many camels to strain at this gnat" In 1840 Auckland remarks, "With many of our statesmen and with all our soldiers there is a strong impatience for the possession of the Punjab" However, the British involvement in the Afghan muddle delayed action on the part of the Company In 1841 Sir William Macadamizing the Punjab and annexation of Peshawar" The failure of the Afghan adventure lowered British prestige and they wanted to demonstrate their strength at the cost of the Amirs of Sind and the Punjab Lord Ellenborough regarded the annexation of the Punjab ' a question of time' and wrote to the Queen on the need of reducing the Sikh power to ineffectiveness To the Duke of Wellington, Ellenborough wrote in October 1843 "the time cannot be far distant when the Punjab will fall in to our management I do not look to this state of things as

likely to occur next year, but as being ultimately inevitable " In another letter to the Duke Written in February 1844, Lord Ellenborough penned "I earnestly hope that we may not be obligated to cross the Sutlej in December next We shall not be ready so soon I am quietly doing what I can to strengthen and equip the army"

Lord Hardinge, a soldier of great repute, succeeded Lord Ellenborough in 1844 the new Governor-General took vigorous measures to strengthen the Company's military position The strength of the Company's army in the Punjab was increased to 32,000 with 68 guns and additional reserve force of 10,000 men at Meerut Besides, 57 boats were brought fro, Bombay for making pontoon bridges over the Sutlej The commander actually gave training to his soldiers in bridge-throwing The sikh soldiers on the other side of the Sutlej saw all this and drew their own conclusions the Company's troops in sind were well-equipped and kept in readiness for any possible march on Multan the Company's contention that the preparations were of a defensive nature and calculated to meet possible eventualities of an attack from Sikhs were clearly hypocritical, considering the chaotic state of affairs in the Punjab

The appointment in 1843 of Major Broadfoots as Company's Agent Ludhiana for dealing with the affairs of the sikhs, worsened Anglo-Sikh relations An energetic and hot-headed man, Major Broadfoot made the impolitic protection equally with Patiala and other chiefships and liable to escheat on the death or deposition of Maharaja Dalip Singh The high handed manner in which he interfered in the affairs of the Priest-like Sodhis of Anandpur caused great concern at Lahore Besides, the order incidents near Ferozepore

and Multan did nor leave the issues in doubt and precipitated matters

P E Roberts and Percival Spear lay undue stress on the explosive situation at Lahore and try to shift the responsibility for the war on the shoulders of the ruling clique and the unmanageable Khalsa army Sper writes, "If the army could not be controlled it must be disbanded or its energies diverted in war No one dared to attempt the former and so the latter was the only recourse" Roberts writes a little more effective language that Rani Jindan dreaded the absolute and capricious power of the Khalsa army and "found her only hope of security in urging it on to challenge British supremacy Either it would spend its superabundant energy in a career of conquest and the sovereignty of Hindustan would pass to the Sikhs, or it would be shattered in the conflict and she could then make her own peace with the offended British nation This-the main failure of the Sikh war-must constantly be borne in mind"

At the time of the Anglo Sikh conflict, selfish and traitorous persons controlled the government at Lahore and the Khalsa army was without a General or at any rate without one supreme controlling mind

The British moves and preparations seemed to denote to the Sikh army "a campaign, not of defence but of aggression and it decided that if the English wanted war they would have it on their own territory" Consequently Sikh troops crossed the Sutlej, between Hariki and Kasur on 11 December 1845 and took offensive against the English troops commanded by Sir Hugh Gough On 13th December Henry Hardinge, the Governor-General, made his declaration of war proclaiming that the possession of Maharaja Dalip Singh on the left of the British bank of the Sutlej was

confiscated and annexed to the British territories Lal Singh, the Commander-in-Chief of Sikh troops, played the traitor and sent a message to the English, as reported for two days from joining the Infantry or Regulars, and had marched them today back to Assul, and would tomorrow to Hariki, if I would consider him and the Bibi Sahib our friends" Four battle were fought at Mudki, Ferozeshah, Buddewal and Aliwal but did not decide the issue The final battle of Sobraon proved decisive Due to the treachery of Lal Singh and Teja Singh, who gave all information regarding the trenches to the English the battle resulted in great slaughter of the Sikh troops An English army crosses the Sutlej, occupied Lahore and dictated peace terms in the very capital of Ranjit Singh on 9 March 1846 the treaty was concluded on the following terms

***Lahore Treaty***

1 The Maharaja renounced "for himself, his heirs and successors, all claims to, or connection with, the territories lying to the south of the river Sutlej"

2 The Maharaja ceded to the Company "in Perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories and rights in the Doab, or country, hill and plain situated between the rivers Beas and Sutlej" His forts, territories and rights in the Doab, or country hill and plain situated between the rivers Beas and Sutlej"

3 The Company demanded a war indemnity of Rs 1½ crores The Lahore Darbar being unable to pay the amount demanded, agreed to transfer to the Company "in the perpetual sovereignty as equivalent for one crore of rupees all hill forts, territories, rights and interests, in the hill

countries, which are situated between the rivers Beas and Indus, including the provinces of Kashmir and Hazarah" The remaining 550 lakhs 50 lakhs of rupees the Lahore Darbar agreed to pay on or before the ratification of the treaty

4 The Maharaja further agreed to "disband the mutinous troops of the Lahore army, taking from them arms" and limiting the regular army to 20,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry

5 The Maharaja agreed "never to take or retain, in his service, any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American state without the consent of the British Government" Further, free passes were to be allow to the British troops through Lahore territories

6 The minor Dalip Singh was recognised as the Maharaja with Rani Jindan as Regent of the State and Lal Singh as the Wazir

7 Sir Henry Lawrence was named as the British Resident at Lahore The Company was not to interfere in the internal administration of the Lahore state

According to a supplementary treaty concluded on 11 March 1846, at the request of Wazir Lal Singh and others a British force was to remain at Lahore till the close of the year 1846 for protecting the person of the Maharaja and Lahore citizens during the reorganisation of the Sikh army The Lahore fort was vacated for the English army and the expenses for the maintenance of the Company's troops were to be defrayed by the Lahore darbar

The Punjab was not annexed in February 1846 The argument that the Punjab was not annexed in deference to the memory of Ranjit Singh, a friend of

the Company, may be dismissed as childish Some British Historians popularised the view that Lord Hardinge followed the policy of "experimental forbearance" A close study of the events and developments suggests that annexation of the Punjab would have created very difficult problems for the British The Khalsa army had been defeated, but not annihilated, there still were 25,000 Sikh soldiers at Lahore and Amristar and 8,000 of them at Peshawar Besides every Sikh peasant knew the use of arms Thus the possibilities of guerrilla warfare could not be ruled out there was also a deficit in the Indian treasury and the hot season was ahead A moderate and conciliatory policy, thus, seemed the best under the circumstances The Governor-General, however, took vigorous steps to weaken the Lahore state 'to such an extent that its absorption was a matter of time' Territorially the Punjab state was reduced in size militarily enfeebled and financially crippled The real game of the English is clear from Lord Hardinge's letter dated 23 October 1847 to Henry Lawrence in which that by the Treaty of Lahore, March 1846, the Punjab never was intended to be an independent state In fact, the native prince is in fetters, and under our protection and must do our bridding"

***The second Anglo-Sikh War, 1848-49***

the few months following the treaty of Lahore greatly disillusioned Rani jindan and Lal Singh and revealed to them thee true intentions of the English They soon began to resent the Resident's control When the Resident asked the Lahore darbar to surrender Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh indirectly encouraged Imam-ud-din, the Darbar's Muslim Governor there, to resist An English force proceeded to Kashmir and captured it Lal Singh was found guilty of complicity in the affair, was tried by a Court of Inquiry presided by

the British Resident, found guilty and exiled The administration of Lahore darbar w entrusted to a Council of Regency consisting Fakir Nur-ud-din, Teja Singh, Sher Singh and Dina Nath

The year 1846 was fast coming to s close and time was coming for the withdrawal of British troops from Lahore Lord Hardinge planned to control the Lahore administration for some years more in the name of, the minor Maharaja The Resident urged so influential Sirdars to petition the Company for the retention of its troops at Lahore during the minority of the Maharaja tense Sirdars were won over by promise of reward of threats of severe action Consequently a new treaty was signed at Bhyrowal on 18 December 1846, which provided for the peace of the country The Lahore darbar agreed to pay Rs 22 lakhs per annum for meeting the expenses of the British force During the minority of Dalip Singh the actual administration was vasted in the British Resident assisted by a Council of eight chiefs Thus, the British Resident became the virtual ruler of the Punjab with unlimited civil and military powers and the Sirdars were reduced to the position of executive officers when Maharani Jindan resented the usurpation of all powers in the hands of the Resident, her turn also came On August 2, 1847, the Governor-General issued a proclamation which read thus "The Governor-General of India who feels the interest of a father in the education and guardianship from the Maharani, his mother" The Maharani was removed to Sheikhupura and her allowance arbitrarily reduced to Rs 48,000 per annum

Lord Hardinges was succeeded by Dalhousies as Governor-General in January 1848 At that time the strength of the British army i the north-west stood at 70,000 soldiers with 9,000 in the Lahore state the new Governor-General was a great imperialist and an

avowed annexationist He did not believe in 'half measures and was strongly of the opinion that the British Government should "not put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory as may from time to time present themselves"

The immediate occasion for the Company's invasion of the Punjab was provided by the revolt of Mul Raj, the Governor of Multan In 1846 at the suggestion of the British Resident, Mul Raj was asked to pay twenty lakh rupees as nazrana and surrender all land north of the Ravi to the Lahore darbar In addition it was decided to raise the revenue of Multan by about one-third for three years Unable to continue under the new harsh conditions imposed on him Mul Raj tendered his resignation in December 1847 He was asked to continue till alternative arrangement were made The new British Resident, Fredrick Currie on his arrival at Lahore in March 1848 sent Khan Singh Mann as the new Governor of Multan on a fixed salary of Rs 30,000 per annum and two British officers accompanied the new Governor to assist him in the take-over The rude and over-bearing behaviour of vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson so greatly irritated the people of Multan that they rose in rebellion and compelled Mul Raj to assume their leadership The two British officers were murdered Multan was all ablaze Soon this fire spread to other parts of the Punjab and developed in to a national rising Chattar Singh, the Singh Governor of Hazara, revolted in August Sher Singh, Chattar Singh's son, who had been sent by the Lahore darbar to besiege Multan, crossed over to the side of the rebels with his entire army The Sikhs also purchased the friendship of the Afghans by the cession of Peshawar A desperate attempt was to shake the British Yoke

The Company's Government delayed action against the rebels of multan because the approaching summer season and prompted by the desire to allow the rebellion to take of the Punjab In October 1848, Dalhousie wrote "The task before me is the utter destruction of its people This must be done promptly, fully and finally" In the Proclamation of war he said "Unwarned by precedents, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nations has called for war and on my words, Sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance"

A large British army under Lord Gough crossed the Ravi on 16 November and fought an indecisive battle at Ramnagar Multan surrendered in January 1849 and the Sikhas suffered a defeat at Chilianwala a few weeks later The final and decisive battle was won by the English at Gujrat, and the whole of the Punjab lay prostrate at their feet

Three courses were open to Dalhousie-(i) The reversion to status quo with a greater degree of British control under the nominal sovereignty of the Maharaja, (ii) annexation of Multan only and punishment of Mul Raj, and (iii) annexation of the whole of the Punjab Dalhousie decided to annex Punjab He did not believe the maintenance of 'sham loyalties' and 'titular dignitaries' He was convinced that all real power must pass into British hands, whether that power was exercised through British officials in the name of the Maharaja or through direct annexation In the former case , Dalhousie argued that "It would be a mockery to pretend that we have preserved the Punjab as a breeding ground for constant intrigues "There never will be peace in punjab", Dalhousie said, "as long as its people are allowed to retain the means and the opportunity of making war There never can be now any guarantee for the tranquility of India, until we shall have effected nation"

Sir Henry Lawrence, the former British Resident at Lahore, contended that annexation might perhaps be just but would be inexpedient John Lawrence described the annexation not only just, but maintained that its expediency was both undeniable and pressing In protest Sir Henry Lawrence tendered his resignation, but withdrew it later at the suggestion of Lord Hardinge, the former Governor-General of India Lord stated by one section of politicians here as ground for not annexing In many judgement this is the argument which would dispose me if were on the spot to annex " In the words of William Hunter, "The victory of Sobraon in 1846 gave to Lord Gardinge the right of conquest, the victory of Gujarat in 1849 compelled Lord Dalhousie to assert that right" On March 29, 1848 came the proclamation from the Governor-General which ran thus "The kingdom of the Punjab is at an end and that all the territories of Maharaja Dalip singh are now, and henceforth , a portion of the British Empire in India" Dalip Singh was given a pension of 550,000 per annum and sent to England for education The administration of the Punjab was entrusted to Board of Commissioners

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## Lord Cornwallis

Unlike Warren Hastings, Lord Cornwallis belonged to a high respectable family of England Before his appointment as Governor-General of Bengal, he had, acted as the Commander-in-Chief of the British armies in North America in the American War of Independence It was hp who had surrendered at York Town and thereby brought to a dose the War of American Independence He accepted the office of the Governor-General with great hesitation It was for his sake that the Pitt's India Act was amended in 1786 so that he might combine in himself the powers of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief He was also given the power to overrule the members of his Executive Council Throughout the period of 7 years when he acted as Governor-General, he enjoyed the confidence of the Board of Control and the Prime Minister of England No wonder, he was able to accomplish a lot The work of Cornwallis can be discussed under two heads foreign policy and internal reforms

*Foreign Policy* As regards his foreign policy, he was determined to follow a policy of non-intervention into the affairs of the Indian States as laid down in the Pitt's India Act It may be pointed out that the Pitt's India Act contained the following clause Whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, honour and the policy of this nation, the

Governor-General and his Council were not, without the express authority of the Court of Directors or of the Select Committee, to declare wars or commence hostilities or enter into any treaty for making war, against any of the country princes or States in India" In pursuance of this policy Cornwallis refused to help the son of Shah Alam to recover his throne of Delhi He gave a stern warning to Mahadji Scindia against interfering into the affairs of Oudh, However, he could not avoid a war against Sultan Tipu

*Third Mysore War* (1790-92) Soon after taking charge, Lord Cornwallis in his letter of November, 1786 to the Court of Directors, anticipated the possibility of a rupture with Tipu because "the ambition and real inclination of Tipu are so well known, that should, unluckily, any difference arise with the French nation, we must lay our account that the Carnatic will immediately after become the scene of a dangerous war" Cornwallis was careful not to give the impression that the English were the aggressors He also did not want to expose the English to the risk of a war with Mysore without getting the help of the Indian States or checking them from joining hands with Tipu Cornwallis followed a very questionable policy In his effort to "conform to the letter of an Act of Parliament (Pitt's India Act) enforcing a system of neutrality, Lord Cornwallis violated its spirit, by not only entering into what was, to all intents and purposes, a new treaty but undertaking engagements which contemplated the dismemberment of the territories of an ally and thereby broke faith with him"

The English had entered into a treaty of alliance with the Nizam in 1766 but that had become ineffective on account of the subsequent treaties which

the English Company made with the rulers of Mysore However, in his letter dated July 1, 1789, Lord Cornwallis stated that the treaty of 1766 was still binding and effective This implied that the British Government did not question the claim of the Nizam to have sovereignty on Mysore and dispose of its territory in whatever manner he liked This was virtually a declaration of war against Mysore

The Raja of Travancore began to take advantage of British hostility towards Tipu In 1789, the Raja purchased the towns and forts of Cranganore and Ayacottah from die Ditch These forts were very important for the safety of Mysore and Tipu was already negotiating for their purchase The action of the Raja was obviously an unfriendly act Tipu demanded the surrender of the forts on the ground that they belonged to his vassal, the Chief of Cochin However, Lord Cornwallis directed the Madras Government to support the Raja of Travancore This made Tipu indignant

In his effort to win over the other Indian powers against Tipu, Lord Cornwallis sent instructions to Malet, the English Resident at Poona, to persuade the Peshwa to fight against Tipu Very attractive terms were offered to the Marathas They were given the hope of recovering what they had lost to Mysore A treaty of alliance was signed on June 1, 1790 with the Peshwa The Nizam signed a treaty with the British on July 4, 1790 Both the treaties were defensive alliances against Tipu and provided for an equal share of conquests The English Company also concluded defensive alliances with the Raja of Coorg and the Bibi of Cannanore It is true that Tipu was aware of the gravity of the situation and he tried to secure French help, but he failed on account of the Revolution in

France He also failed to win over the Nizam and die Peshwa to his side He appealed to Cornwallis for peace but that appeal also failed and, he Third Mysore War started

To begin with, things did not go in favour of the English Company in spite of the help from the Marathas anti the Nizam In 1790, Cornwallis himself took the command He captured Bangalore and defeated Tipu but was forced to withdraw on account of shortage of supplies In 1792, Cornwallis captured the hill forts of Tipu and advanced upon Seringapatam The Marathas completely destroyed the Mysore territory Finding his position helpless, Tipu sued for peace and the Treaty of Seringapatam was concluded in 1792 By this treaty, Sultan, Tipu had to give up half of his territory He was to pay a war indemnity of 3½ crores of rupees He was to surrender two of his sons as hostages The English, the Nizam and the Marathas divided the acquired territory among themselves The English got Malabar, Coorg, Dindigul and Baramahal The Marathas got territory on the northwest and Nizam on the northeast of Mysore

Critics point out that Cornwallis could easily depose Sultan Tipu and annex the whole of Mysore Had he done so in 1792, no necessity for the fourth Mysore War would have arisen in the time of Lord Wellesley However, Cornwallis was wise in not doing so He followed a policy of caution The Marathas and the Nizam might have betrayed him Such an, act would not have been approved by the Court of Directors and the Board of Control War with France was imminent and the home authorities were asking for peace Cornwallis was not eager to take over the management of the whole of Mysore and so he

deliberately stayed his hands Moreover, if Cornwallis had taken away the whole of the territory of Sultan Tipu, he would have been forced to share the same with the Marathas and the Nizam No wonder, Cornwallis wrote thus "We have effectually crippled our enemy without making our friends too formidable "

After the Third Mysore War, Tipu applied himself vigorously to internal administration By 1794, he was able to pay the war indemnity and redeem his sons He reorganized his military forces He improved the fortifications of his capital He encouraged cultivation and industrial pursuits The result was that Mysore presented the picture of art efficient, well-managed and prosperous state, He was extremely cautious in his relations with his neighbours Nana Fadnavis also adopted a friendly attitude towards Mysore, and refused to agree to a new treaty proposed by Cornwallis guaranteeing the allies against aggression from Tipu

*Reforms of Cornwallis* Lord Cornwallis carried out a large number of reforms Those related to the services of the Company, the judicial system and the revenue settlement of Bengal

*Reform of Public Services* The servants of the English Company were both inefficient and corrupt They spent a lot of their time in carrying on private trade They were corrupt because they got very low salaries Cornwallis was determined to see that the servants of the Company become honest and upright He was able to induce the Directors to pay good salaries to the servants of the Company He reduced the number of officers but increased the salaries of others He demanded whole-time service from the servants of the Company Private trade was completely prohibited Cornwallis refused to oblige those

Englishmen who came to India with chits from the Directors and members of the Board of Control On one occasion, he refused to oblige so great a person as Dundas, President of the Board of Control

While making appointments, he gave the best jobs only to the Europeans in general and the Englishmen in particular He was convinced, that the Indians were unworthy of trust and they could not be allowed to fill in any but the humblest offices in the government The exclusion of the Indians from all effective share of the Government of their own country was almost without a parallel Cornwallis treated the Indians with scorn He stigmatized the whole nation as unworthy of trust and incapable of honourable conduct The Cornwallis system was calculated to debase rather than uplift the people fallen under the dominion, of the Company He would have got the same amount of loyalty, efficiency and uprightness from the Indian officers as he got from the European and Englishmen if he had given them the same salaries

*Judicial reforms* Cornwallis carried out his judicial reforms in 1787, 1790 and 1793 The reforms made by him in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa served as model for Madras and Bombay The main object of the reforms of 1787 was economy The number of districts was reduced from 36 to 23 and for each district an Englishman who was a covenanted servant of the English Company, was made the Collector The latter was not only to collect revenue but was also to act as a magistrate and judge The Collector was required to perform the three duties separately in three different capacities and not to combine them and exercise them all at one time While sitting in the revenue court, he was not to exercise the powers of a magistrate and vice versa Appeals were to be taken to the Board of

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Lord Cornwallis provided for the establishment of four courts of circuit The three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were divided into four divisions and for each of those divisions a court of circuit was provided Each circuit court was presided over by two covenanted servants of the English Company It was held by the chief Kadi and Mufties who were appointed and removed by the Governor-General-in-Council on the ground of misconduct or incapacity for the performance of their functions Each circuit court was required to move in its division for the disposal of cases The decisions of the circuit court were to be executed by the magistrates In the case of punishment of death or perpetual imprisonment, the decision of the circuit court had to be confirmed by the Sadar Nizamat Adalat

The Collector of the district was made a magistrate He was given the duty of apprehending murderers, robbers, thieves, house-breakers and other disturbers of peace If after preliminary enquiry, the Collector found that there was no prima facie case against the accused, he acquitted him If he found the accused guilty in a petty case, he convicted him But in serious cases, it was his duty either to put the accused in Faujdari jail to stand his trial before the circuit court or let him off on bail till the time the court of circuit met at the district headquarters There were certain cases in which the Magistrate was not allowed to let off the prisoners on bail, e g , murder and robbery

Cornwallis had found that on account of low salaries the judicial officers were taken from the dregs of society They were also tempted to accept bribes Cornwallis provided for liberal salaries so that men of character and ability might join tire judicial service

He defended the additional expenditure on the ground that it was necessary for the administration of justice

Other changes were made by Cornwallis in 1793 The Maal Adalats or revenue courts were abolished and all revenue cases were transferred to the ordinary civil courts known as Diwani Adalats Provision was made for the establishment of a court of Diwani Adalat in every district of the three provinces Every such court was to be presided over by a covenanted servant of the Company, At the time of taking office, the judge was required to take a prescribed oath Diwani Adalats tried both civil and revenue cases, but they had nothing to do with criminal cases, Ordinarily, cases were to be tried according to Hindu law or Mohammedan law However, if there was no specific provision on any point, the same was to be disposed of according to justice, equity and good conscience

A regulation of the same year made the servants of the Company liable before the courts of justice It was provided that the natives of India were to be allowed to bring cases against British subjects in the Diwani Adalats If the amount involved was not more than Rs 500 If it was more than Rs 500, the suit had to be filed in the Supreme Court at Calcutta

Even those cases in which the Government was a party were to be tried by the ordinary civil courts

Provision was made for four provincial courts of appeals for the three presidencies Their headquarters were to be at Calcutta, Murshidabad, Dacca and Patna Every provincial court of appeal was to be presided over by three covenanted servants of the English Company These courts were given both original and appellate jurisdiction Their decisions were final in cases involving Rs 1,000 or less If the

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for adding to the expenses of administration, he defended the reforms on the ground that those were absolutely necessary for the efficient administration of justice and the peace and prosperity of the country His view was that as the English Company was getting a lot of money from the people of India in, the form of revenue, it was criminal to make economy in the administration of justice However, his system suffered from certain shortcomings He avoided the appointment of Indians to jobs of responsibility and position in the judicial hierarchy Indians were appointed only Munsiffs This policy continued up to the time of Lord William Bentinck, when the same was reversed

*Police reforms* Formerly, the zamitidars exercised police powers It was their duty to maintain law and order and arrest the suspected persons They also commanded the local police forces The reform of Cornwallis took away the police powers of the zamindars, He also divided the districts into small areas and each of these areas was placed under a Darogha or superintendent under the supervision of a representative of the Company in the district The police services were Europeanised with fixed salaries and functions

*Permanent Settlement of Bengal* (1793) Another great achievement of Cornwallis was the permanent settlement of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa When in 1765 the English Company secured the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa It was found that the ryot or the cultivator paid a fixed share of the produce of his land either in cash or in kind to the zamindar The latter was merely the, collector of revenue However, his office gradually hid become hereditary, Thus, the zamindari, which was originally contract agency,

became something resembling a landed estate Zamindar received the revenue, paid 9/10ths, to Viceroy and 1/10th to himself He inherited his zamindari, and could sell or give away his office on obtaining permission and could demand compensation if the State deprived him of it He was responsible for maintaining peace within his jurisdiction In, 1765, the work of collection of revenue was left in the hands of the natives, but in 1769, British supervisors were appointed to control them Things did not improve in spite of this change In 1772, Warren Hastings set up the quinquennial settlement, but the same was discontinued in 1777 on account of the failure of the experiment The old system of annual settlements was resorted to In 1784, an Act a Parliament directed tire Court of Directors to abandon the annual settlement and frame permanent rules for the collection of land revenue

When Lord Cornwallis came to India he found "agriculture and trade decaying, zamindars and ryots sinking into poverty and money-lenders the only flourishing class in the community" The Directors of the Company were also alarmed at the steady deterioration of the revenue election It was found that annual collection left the zamindars in arrears and did not benefit any class They recommended a moderate permanent assessment as more beneficial both to the Government and the people They condemned the employment of temporary renters and farmers who had no interest either in the State or in the ryots They oppressed the latter as much as they could Cornwallis got these instructions but felt that it was not possible to carry them out Certain changes had already been brought about in revenue administration with the object of decentralization The Board of Revenue controlled the collectors who were in charge

of land revenue collections In 1787 and 1788, annual settlement, were made by the Collectors In 1789, a decennial settlement was made

It was found that there were two schools of thought with regard to the revenue settlement The school led by James Grant emphasized the fact that the zamindars had no permanent rights whether as proprietors of the soil or as officials who collected and paid the rent The State was not bound by any definite limit in its demands from them The other school of thought was led by Sir John Shore Its view was that the proprietary rights in the land belonged to the zamindars and that the State was entitled only to a customary revenue front them For an accurate settlement, the proportion of rent actually paid and the actual collections and payments made by zamindars and farmers should both be ascertained He was in favour of a direct settlement with the zamindars for 10 years There were other officials who were in favour of a permanent settlement with the zamindars Cornwallis was of the opinion that a decennial settlement would have all the disadvantages of an annual Settlement It would not give the zamindars sufficient inducement to ensure the clearance of the extensive jungles in the provinces Sir John contended that a permanent settlement would result in an unfair distribution of the assessment particularly when there was no survey In 1790, the rules for the decennial settlement were published and it was stated that at the end of that period, the settlement would probably be made permanent In accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors the settlement of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was made permanent in Match 1793 The settlement was made as high as possible As a matter of fact, it was practically double of what it was in 1765 "It was

possible to raise it so high because it was declared to be final and permanent "

It is to be noted that the permanent settlement was not a hastily devised measure It did not emanate solely from Cornwallis Many of the permanent officials recommended such a change The new settlement was based on the information acquired during many years of enquiry It had also the full support of the home authorities as it was sanctioned by Pitt, Prime Minister of England, Dundas, President of Board of Control and the Court of Directors

*Provisions* The permanent settlement created a limited proprietary right in the land in the zamindars All rights of the State in the nature of Nazrana and permission to sell fees were given up Magisterial powers were taken away from zamindars They were left with no police work As long as they paid revenue to the Government in time they were left in their relation with their tenants If they did not pay the land revenue, a part of their land was to be disposed of to recover the land revenues

Historians have passed conflicting judgments with regard to the merits and demerits of permanent settlement According to Marshman, "It as a bold, brave and wise measure Under the genial influence of this territorial charter, which for the first time created indefeasible rights and interests in the soil, population has increased, cultivation has been extended and a gradual improvement has become visible in the habits and comforts of the people " According to R C Dutt, "If the prosperity and happiness of a nation, be the criterion of, wisdota and success Lord Cornwallis Permanent Settlement of 1793 the widest and most successful measure which the British nation had ever adopted in India " He further added that the

permanent settlement was "the one act of British nation, within the century and a half of their rule in India which has most effectually safeguarded the economic welfare of the people " On the other hand, Holmes condemned the permanent settlement in these words "The permanent settlement was, a sad blunder The interior tenants derived from it no benefit whatever The zamindars again and again failed to pay their rent charges, and their estates were sold for the benefit of the Government " In spite of these judgments, it is desirable to discuss the merits and demerits of the settlement separately

Merits (1) The State was assured of a certain amount of land revenue from the people It was not to depend upon the results of annual bidding If a zamindar did not pay the land revenue, the same could be realised by settling a portion of his land

(2) The landlords knew that they had to pay a specific amount of money as land revenue to the Government If they put more labour and capital in the land and got more profit out of it, they stood to gain because Government share was not to increase proportionately It was absolutely fixed whether the landlord cultivated their lands more or less At the time of the settlement, many parts of the land were covered with jungles and the same, were cleared after the settlement

(3) Cornwallis thought that the permanent settlement of Bengal would play the same part in creating a loyal class which the establishment of the Bank of England had played in the case of William III and Mary, The zamindars who were made the owners of land could be counted upon to defend the rule of the English Company against their rivals and opponents, It was found that these very zamindars were loyal to

the British Government during the days of the Mutiny No wonder, Setton Carr observes that the political benefits of the settlement balanced its economic defects

(4) The permanent settlement gave popularity and stability to the British Government and thus helped to make the province the healthiest and most flourishing in India

(5) The permanent settlement set free the ablest servants of the Company for judicial work Formerly, they had to waste a lot of their time every year in offering the, collection of revenue to the highest bidder and realising the same amount

(6) The permanent settlement avoided the evils of periodical settlements which, in spite of long intervals, produced economic dislocation, evasion, concealment of worth and the deliberate throwing of land out of cultivation

(7) It is true that the Government could not increase the land revenue in the future but, it gained in an indirect manner As the people be came, richer, the Government got money by taxing them in various ways

(8) A permanent land tax is inexpensive, uniform and certain It has all the advantages mentioned by Adam Smith in his Canons of Taxation

*Demerits* (1) The immediate effect of the permanent settlement on the zamindars was disastrous Many of them could not realise the land revenue from their tenants and consequently could not pay the money to the Government in time The result was that their lands were sold

(2) Contrary to the expectations, the landlords did

not take much interest in the development of their lands They became merely absentee landlords living in Calcutta or at the district town, on the income derived from the tenants It has rightly been pointed out that although Cornwallis intended to create a class of English landlords in Bengal, what he actually created was a class of Irish landlords

(3) The permanent settlement ignored the rights of the tenants They were left absolutely at the mercy of the landlords who could oust them at any time The landlord could charge any amount of money from the tenants he pleased It is true that Cornwallis had laid down that the zamindar should keep a register of his tenants and grant them Pattahs or leases, specifying the rents they were to pay, and that in cage of any infringement of these rules, the ryot was to seek a remedy in an action against him in the civil court," but unfortunately the registers were not kept and the Pattahs were rarely given The remedy of the civil court was a very expensive one and the poor tenants felt that they could not take advantage of it This state of affairs continued till the Government came to the rescue of the tenants and safeguarded their interests by passing tenancy legislation

(4) The Government lost for ever a share of the unearned increment The deficit was estimated at Rs 4½ crores

(5) Bengal did not possess, cadastral records till 1893 and consequently there was expensive litigation between the tenants and the landlords

Setton Carr sums up his criticism thus "The permanent settlement somewhat secured the interests of the zamindars, postponed those of the tenants and permanently sacrificed those of the State," According to P E Roberts, "Had the permanent settlement been

postponed for another 10 to 20 years, the capacities of the land would have been better ascertained Many mistakes and anomalies would have been avoided, and the reforms brought about by Cornwallis himself in the civil service would have trained up a class of officials far more competent to deal with so Vast a subject"

According to Baden-Powell, "The permanent settlement disappointed many expectations and produced several results that were not anticipated" "A very great blunder as well as gross injustice was committed when a settlement was made with the zamindars alone and the rights of property every bit as good as theirs were ignored" "He committed himself to a policy which in regard to the three interested parties—the zamindar, the ryot and the ruling power assured the welfare of the first, somewhat postponed the claims of the second and sacrificed the interests of the third" "The permanent settlement in contrast to the chaotic system which it supplanted, had many fairly obvious advantages"

According to Dr Tara Chand, "The Permanent Settlement deprived the State of a share in the increase of rent which resulted from the general improvement of the economic conditions and handed over the entire unearned increment to the zamindars In the second place, while the settlement favoured a handful of landholders, it completely ignored the interest to that vast mass of the oppressed cultivators, whose resentment and dissatisfaction seemed to evoke no sympathy Munro wrote, "it seems extraordinary that it should ever have been conceived that a country could be as, much benefited by giving up a share of the public rent to a small class of zamindars or mootadars as by giving it to ryots from whom all rent is derived"

*Cornwallis Completed the Work of Hastings* Dr

Aspinall rightly remarks that it is no disparagement of Cornwallis's work to point out that he completed what Hastings had begun In 1772, Warren Hastings had abolished the double government of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa which was set up in 1765 by Lord Clive The judicial and police reforms of Cornwallis completed that constitutional change

Warren Hastings had come to the conclusion that the servants of the Company were not likely to become honest in their work unless their Salaries were increased and their private trade was prohibited In 1774, he had prohibited the members of the Supreme Council from engaging in trade and had increased their remuneration by means of a commission in 1781 he introduced fixed salaries for the members of the Committee of Revenue and commission of one per cent of net revenue Cornwallis was ,able to take the reform a step fur ‘ then He extended the improved scales of pay and allowances to all the senior servants However, he was not in a position to extend the prohibition of trade to all officials

Warren Hastings had realised the danger of entrusting power into the hands of the Indian officials who were as a rule corrupt He had made the Collector the superintendent of the district criminal court To substitute English for Indian judges was merely the next step The appointment by Warren Hastings of Indian magistrates charged with the supervision of the Mofussil police and with the duty of arresting and committing for trial did not prove a success Consequently, these offices Were abolished by Warren Hastings While doing so, he gave the magisterial powers to the judges of the civil courts

The separation of revenue administration from civil jurisdiction, which was accomplished by

Cornwallis, was foreseen by Warren Hastings who began the change in 1780 The judges whom he appointed in charge of new civil courts were not at all connected with revenue work The bifurcation of functions was only partial because the Collectors were still authorised to decide cases relating to revenue and consequently the jurisdiction of the civil judge and the Collettor was continually clashing It is probable that if Warren Hastings had stayed longer in India, he would have remedied the situation in the same way as Cornwallis did in 1793

In the matter of substituting English criminal law for Mohammedan law Cornwallis went only a little further than Warren Hastings The latter was of opinion that until the constitution of Bengal "shall have attained the same perfection" as the English, "no conclusion can be drawn from the English that can be properly applied to the manners and state of this country " The only legislative change made by Warren Hastings was to give very severe punishment to dacoits and their families In many cases, the Supreme Court intervened, to alter the unsuitable punishments prescribed by Mohammedan law Undoubtedly Cornwallis made more use of the legislative power than Warren Hastings did But even he was cautious in making changes in Mohammedan criminal law Although he had very strong views regarding the superiority of the criminal law of Great Britain, he did, not radically alter the Mohammedan criminal law Generally, Cornwallis carried on the work which Hastings had starteded He met with much less interference, criticism and obstruction than his predecessor did

The Code of Civil Procedure of Cornwallis was based on the earlier codes which Warren Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey had compiled and for which James

Stephen had a word of praise It is for these reasons that it has been stated that "if the foundation of the civil administration had been laid by Warren Hastings the,' structure was raised by Lord Cornwallis "

According to Lord Curzon, Lord Cornwallis was a man with quite ordinary abilities but with a sterling character, a great fund of common-sense and a superb and untiring devotion to duty-who left a considerable mark upon the Indian administration Cornwallis was one of those men upon whom Government rely to do their business straightforwardly, efficiently and well For twenty years he was the deus ex-machine to whom successive ministries turned to extricate them from muddles or to place disordered affairs upon a stable basis Even his failures never counted against him The surrender of York Town brought with it no censure, but was followed by other and higher employments Twenty years later the Treaty of Amiens ' which Cornwallis was sent out to negotiate, proved to be obsolete almost as soon as it had been signed But no one blamed its author It was always felt that Cornwallis had done his ' best in an honest, capable, commonense way, and that no lower consideration than the honour of his country had guided his action Thus, although destitute of any pretension to genius and with quite mediocre intellectual gifts he filled post after post in the internal and external services of Britain and was regarded as having comported himself in each with credit and success Again, 'The administration of Cornwallis, which was prolonged for seven years in spite of his frequently expressed desire to return, was remarkable for his internal reforms, in which, with a courage that cannot be over-praised, he set his face against the jobbery and corruption that still permeated the civil service, carrying the now forgotten crusade of Clive to its logical conclusion by

the grant of decent salaries to the writers in return for the prohibition of private trade The civil and criminal courts were re formed, and the inefficiency in the military services, which had reached the dimensions of a scandal, was severally taken in hand

The permanent settlement in Bengal, which is invariably associated with the name of Cornwallis, but which was really the work of his civilian advisers albeit the best of them, Sir John Shore, who advocated a decennial term, was unfortunately overrued, is now generally regarded as having been a mistake, and has happily not been followed in any other province Perhaps, how ever, the most characteristic, at also the most creditable, of Cornwallis's achievements was the fearless courage with which he fought against jobbery in any form, refusing to yield a jot to the shameless pressure that was brought to bear upon him from the highest quarters in London, including the Prince of Wales

Sir John Shore wrote of him "The honesty of his principles influensible he is manly, affable, and goodnatured, of an excellent, judgment, and he has a degree of application to business beyond what you would suppose', and again 'His situation was incomfortable on arrival, he now receives the respect due to his zeal, integrity and indefatigable application '

"A study of Cornwallis's character and a survey of his administration leave us with a very pleasant impression of the service that can be rendered in an oriental dependency—or, indeed, anywhere—by transparent honesty of purpose, a total absence of self-seeking and unswerving devotion to duty Cornwallis neither did nor attempted anything brilliant but he never spared himself in making things better than he found them and in diffusing a general sense of

contentment and stability According to Dodwell, "Lord Cornwallis' was a public servant who held national and not private traditions His service was to the Crown and the people whom he governed, and he thus embodied fitly the new spirit of Indian rule "

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# Lord Wellesley

Lord Wellesley, "the great Pro-Consul", was appointed the Governor-General of Bengal at the age of 37 He was one of the greatest of the British rulers of India The only persons who can stand comparison with him are Lord Clive, Warren Hastings and Lord Dalhousie In the matter of actual achievements, he beat all of them When Lord Wellesley came to India as Governor-General, the condition of India was very critical The Nizam was angry because the English Company had not helped him when he was attacked by the Marathas in the time of Sir John Shore He was organizing a body of regular troops under a French officer named Raymond He was not in a mood to come to terms with the English Company The Marathas were also feeling a sense of importance on account of their victory over the Nizam They had huge resources and were controlling practically the whole of Central India Scindia had a powerful army which was trained and commanded by a Frenchman called Perron Undoubtedly, the key positions occupied by the French officers in the Indian States were a source of real danger to the English Company Sultan Tipu had not forgotten the humiliation to which he was subjected by Lord Cornwallis when he was forced to give up half of his territory, pay a huge war indemnity and also surrender his two sons as hostages He was the deadly enemy of the English Company and openly so He was carrying on negotiations with the French Governor of

Mauritius and Reunion He had employed French officers to drill his soldiers train them There was the danger of the invasion of Napoleon He was already on his way to the East

Thus the political situation in the country was not an easy one The Company had not much of resources and it was left to the intelligence, bravery and resourcefulness of Lord Wellesley to tackle the situations in a masterly manner Within the next 7 years, Lord Wellesley was able to defeat Pod humble the enemies of the English Company Many of them submitted without striking a blow However, before he could finish his work, he was forced to resign in 1805

The one thing to be noted with regard to Lord Wellesley is that when lit came to India, he felt that the policy of non-intervention was not at all practicable That was due to the political condition in the country On account of the absence of a paramount power each State could do whatever it pleased There was no guarantee of peace There was no supreme power to which an aggrieved State could appeal for help Under the circumstances, Lord Wellesley came to the conclusion that either the English Company must become the Supreme power in the country or quit the country There was absolutely no halfway It was with this conviction in mind that Lord Wellesley started his work

*Subsidiary system* One of the great master strokes of Lord Wellesley was the application of the system of subsidiary alliances to a large number of Indian States It was in this way that he was able to add to the resource of the English Company, oust the foreigners from the Indian States and make the English Company the arbiter in the affairs of the Indian States However, it is wrong to say that Lord

Wellesley was the author of the system of subsidiary alliances

According to Sir Alfred Lyall, there were four stages in the evolution of the subsidiary system To begin with, the English Company contented itself with lending a military contingent to help some Indian princes This was done by Warren Hastings when he lent British troops to the Nawab of Oudh to fight against the Rohillas The second stage came when the English Company took the field on its own account It was usually assisted by the army of some Indian prince who was not strong enough to do the job single-handed In the third stage, the English Company asked the ruler of the State to give money so that troops might be maintained for the defence of the State Such a treaty was made by Sir John Shore with the Nawab of Oudh in 1797 The Nawab promised to pay a sum of Rs 76 lakhs a year A similar treaty was made with the Nizam by Lord Wellesley

The English Company was not satisfied with the subsidies paid by the Indian rulers In many cases, they were too irregular to be depended upon The result was that the English Company thought of another form of subsidiary system under which an Indian State was made to give up a part of its territory so that out of its revenues the troops could be maintained

It is rightly pointed out that the English were not the originators of the system of subsidiary alliances According to Ranade, "the idea was in fact a mere reproduction on a more organised scale of the plan followed by the Maratha leaders a hundred years in advance when they secured the grant of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the Imperial authority at Delhi " Some writers give credit to the French It is pointed

out that it is men like Dupleix who started the system of giving help to the Indian rulers for money or other reward However, it cannot be denied that it was Lord Wellesley who perfected the system of subsidiary alliances

Under the subsidiary system, the ruler who entered into a subsidiary alliance, was to give money or some territory to the English Company for the maintenance of a contingent force He was also to agree to deal with foreign States only through the English Company He was to have no direct correspondence or relations with them If the ruler had any dispute with any other State, he was to make the English Company his arbitrator He was to turn out from his State all non-English Europeans whether they were employed in the army or civil administration The English Company was to undertake to defend that State from external attack or internal trouble It is clear that the subsidiary State surrendered its political independence in return for British protection

***Merits of the system***

It cannot be denied that the subsidiary system added to the resources of the English Company and it was partly with the help of these resources that the English Company was able to establish itself as the paramount power in the country The Indian States entering into subsidiary alliances gave money or territories out of whose revenue troops could be maintained by the English Company Their troops were always at the beck and call of the English Company The result was that although outwardly the troops were maintained with the money of the Indian States for their defence, actually they added to the resources -of the English Company It is well known that the Nizam entered into a subsidiary alliance with

the English in the time of Wellesley With the money got from him, an army was maintained and put under the charge of Sir Arthur Wellesley That army was used in various campaigns in which Lord Wellesley was involved The system of subsidiary alliances enabled the English Company to throw forward their military frontier in advance of their political frontier Although the English Company was not burdened with the responsibility of the administration of the States joining the subsidiary system, its influence was enhanced The evils of war were kept at a distance from the territories of the English Company The territories under the English Company did not suffer because the battles were fought in most cases in the territories of the States joining the subsidiary alliance The system of subsidiary alliance did not arouse the jealousy of other European nations The reason was that outwardly the independence of the States was maintained The English Company was able to exclude the influence of the French from the Indian States Whenever a State entered into a subsidiary alliance, the ruler had to drive out all Europeans who were not Englishmen

***Demerits of the system***

The one great demerit of the system was that the amount of money demanded from the rulers of the Indian States was out of all proportion to their resources The result was that the rulers of The states paid the money to the company even at the expense of the welfare of their people All kinds of methods were adopted to collect the money so that the English Company might not have an excuse to demand territory from that State However, in certain cases even when the subsidy was paid regularly, the English company forced the ruler to hand over certain territory for the maintenance, of the army This was done by

Wellesley when he forced the Nawab of oudh to give Gorakhpur, Rohilkhand and the Doab for the maintenance of troops by the Company The subsidiary system resulted in the internal decay protected States It destroyed the initiative of the ruling princes It made them dependent on the English Company The result was that the Indian princes led lives of vice and corruption on account of the assurance that the English Company was always there to help them in times of trouble The people of the States were deprived of the natural remedy of revolution They had no chance of success even if they dare to revolt against their corrupt ruler The Court of Directors did not approve of the subsidiary system because it created jealousy among the Indian States against the English Company Moreover, the Directors were also opposed to the policy of annexing territories

On the whole, the system of subsidiary alliances helped the English Company to tide over its difficulties and emerge as a great power in the country

***Fourth Mysore war***

It has already been pointed out that Sultan Tipu had not forgotten the humiliating treatment which had been meted out to him by Cornwallis He was determined to have his revenge He sent his emissaries to Kabul, Constantinople, Arabia and Mauritius The Sultan planted the tree of liberty at Seringapatam He was elected a member of the Jacobin Club of France He tried to correspond with Napoleon who was in Egypt at that time French generals were drilling his forces The situation was serious and Lord Wellesley at once made up his mind to deal with it with a firm hand

Before taking action against Tipu, Wellesley tried to win over the Nizam and the Marathas and

succeeded so far as the Nizam was concerned. The Nizam entered into a subsidiary alliance with the English Company in September 1798. He agreed to make a payment for the maintenance of the contingent force. He agreed to turn out the officers of other European nations. The French army of the Nizam was disbanded.

Having got the support of the Nizam on his side, Lord Wellesley demanded absolute submission from Sultan Tipu. As the latter did not carry out the command, war was declared. The main army was under General Harris and he proceeded towards Mysore. Arthur Wellesley, the younger brother of the Governor-General and later known as the Duke of Wellington, was in-charge of the Nizam's contingent. A force from Bombay also marched towards Mysore. The armies carried everything before them and reached Seringapatam. Sultan Tipu refused to accept the humiliating terms offered to him and died fighting in the ramparts of Seringapatam. This was in May 1799. After the victory, Wellesley annexed large and important territories, which included Kanara, Coimbatore and Seringapatam. Mysore was surrounded on all sides by British territory. The Nizarn was given some territory as a reward for the help given by him. Certain territories were offered to the Marathas also on certain conditions which they refused to accept. A child of the Hindu family who had been turned out by Haidar Ali was placed once again on the throne of Mysore.

Many critics have condemned the Fourth Mysore War as unnecessary and unjustified. It is pointed out that the French danger was needlessly magnified by Wellesley. There is a lot of truth in this criticism. Wellesley was a full-blooded imperialist to whom Tipu was a formidable hurdle in the expansion of the

British empire in Southern India and consequently the liquidation of Tipu was a top priority in his political calculation Wellesley knew that with the disappearance of Tipu from the political scene, the steamroller of British imperialism would be able to crush very easily any opposition from the Marathas The Nizam was too weak power to create any difficulty Wellesley considered Tipu as the real enemy of the British and hence took action against him Otherwise, there was no moral justification for the war

It cannot be denied that the Fourth Mysore War placed on the throne of Mysore a safe and dependable vassal who was shorn of former prestige and glory The British became the strongest power in Southern India They had no fear of rival combinations The capture of Seringapatam was an event of great importance, after Plassey and Buxar

It is wrong to say that Sultan Tipu was a savage, barbarous and cruel fanatic He was an industrious ruler who himself attended to every branch of administration He was not cruel by nature He was cruel only towards his enemies and he hated the English from the very core of his heart He could never reconcile himself to cooperate with the English Company He fought against the British tooth and nail and died fighting, but could not think of coming to a compromise with them He was inclined towards the French and his preference for them continued all his life

The English hated him and dreaded him According to Kirkpatrik Sultan Tipu was "the cruel and relentless enemy the oppressive and unjust ruler and what not " According to Wilks, Haidar was seldom wrong and Tipu seldom right Unlimited persecution

united in detestation of his rule every Hindu in his dominion He was barbarous where severity was vice and indulgent where it was virtue if he had qualities fitted for empire they were strangely equivocal There is a Mysore proverb that "Haidar was born to create an Empire, Tipu to lose one"

However, there are other writers who have paid tributes to the intelligence and other qualities of head and heart of Sultan Tipu As a domestic ruler, he sustains an advantageous comparison with the greatest princes of the East When a person travelling through a strange country finds it well cultivated, populous with industrious inhabitants cities newly founded, commerce extending, towns in and everything flourishing so as to indicate happiness, he will naturally conclude it to be under a form of government congenial to the winds of the people This is a picture of Tipu's country, and this is our conclusion respecting its government Major Dirom remarked thus "His country was found everywhere full of inhabitants, and apparently cultivated to the utmost extent to which the soil was capable, while the discipline and fidelity of his troops in the field, until their last overthrow, were testimonies equally strange of the excellent regulations which existed in his army His government, though strict and arbitrary, was despotism of a politic and able sovereign"

There is not much to condemn the character of Sultan Tipu, His misfortune was that he was pitted against the British Government which had endless resources He could not find anybody to help him in his hour of difficulty While the English were able to win over the Marathas and the Nizam on the occasion of the third Mysore War and the Nizam in the fourth Mysore War, Tipu had to fight alone The French on whom he depended failed him completely

*Tanjore, Surat and Carnatic* Lord Wellesley had to deal with Tanjore, Surat and Carnatic In October 1799, Wellesley entered into a subsidiary treaty with the Raja of Tanjore The Raja practically gave up the administration into the hands of the English Company in lieu of the payment of £40,000 a year In the case of Surat, Wellesley abolished, the double government granted a pension to the Nawab and took over the supreme control of the country into his own hands As regards Carnatic, its government was rotten and scandalous, It was alleged that the Nawab of Carnatic and his son had entered into correspondence with Sultan Tipu Although the evidence was not conclusive, Wellesley took over the civil and military government of Carnatic in July 1801, when the Nawab died The Nawab was allowed to retain his title and he was to be paid 20 per cent of the revenue of his State

Wellesley's treatment of Oudh was altogether high-handed The Nawab of Oudh was asked to disband a part of his army and receive a bigger subsidiary force The Nawab resisted and even expressed his willingness to abdicate When Wellesley showed his readiness to accept the offer of abdication, the Nawab withdrew the offer He declared that he was prepared to abdicate provided his son was allowed to succeed him The indignation of Wellesley knew no bounds and he was disgusted with the duplicity and insincerity of the Nawab, Wellesley prepared it new draft treaty by which the size of the contingent force was to be increased and the subsidy was increased to 1¼ million sterling Wellesley did not care at all for the protests of the Nawab The result was that the Nawab gave way

However, in spite of this, Wellesley made new demands on the Nawab Although the Nawab had paid his subsidies regularly, Wellesley demanded and got

the surrender of Rohilkhand and the southern districts between the Ganges and the Jumna All this amounted to about one-half of his dominions Naturally, the Nawab resented Sir Alfred Lyall says that Wellesley "subordinated the feelings and interests of his ally to paramount considerations of British policy in a manner that showed very little patience, forbearance or generosity The only justification for such a policy was, expediency"

Wellesley also took certain steps to meet the French menace He was in favour of an expedition against Mauritius but the English Admiral refused to cooperate and the scheme had to be given up He urged the ministry at home to capture Ceylon and Batvia from the Dutch, but failed to secure their assent He sent Indian troops to Egypt to cooperate in the expulsion of the French from that country Wellesley also sent John Malcolm to Persia to counteract the French and Russian advance in that direction

The Maratha State was not a unified State It was merely a confederacy The Peshwa was weak and not in a position to control and direct the other Maratha chiefs The important Maratha chiefs were Scindhia, Holkar, Gaikwad and Bhonsla The Marathas were not very strong on account of the mutual jealousies of the Maratha chiefs

In March 1800, Nana Fadnavis died at Poona and with him departed "all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha government" Both Scindhia and Holkar tried to establish their control over the Peshwa and started fighting with each other The Peshwa submitted to the control of Scindhia but Holkar would not tolerate this He attacked and defeat Scindhia an tried to establish his control over the Peshwa This

was too much for the Peshwa who ran away to Bassein to secure help from the English Company It was in the circumstances that the Treaty of Bassein was signed on 31st December 1802 Both the Peshwa and the English agreed that the friends and enemies of the one should be treated as the friends and enemies of the other The British were to protect the territory of Peshwa as their own For that purpose, a subsidiary force of not less than 6,000 regular infantry with the usual proportion of field artillery was to be permanently stationed in the territory of the Peshwa For, the expenses of that force, the Peshwa was to give to the British districts yielding, Rs 26 lakhs a year The Peshwa was not to entertain in his service any European hostile to the British In the case of a dispute arising with the Nizam, the Peshwa was to accept British arbitration The Peshwa was to respect the treaty of friendship contracted by the Gaikwad with the British and accept British arbitration in the case of a dispute The British and the Peshwa were to give each other more military help whenever necessary The Peshwa bound himself to negotiate in no hostilities with other States without a previous consultation with the British Government As soon as the treaty was signed the British took the Peshwa to Poona and put him on his throne in May 1803

A lot of importance has been attached to the treaty of Bassein It has been regarded as one of the important landmarks of British dominion in India The English Company was able to bring the head of the Marathas under its control It must have been understood that such a state of affairs would not be acceptable to the other Maratha chiefs Those who entered into the treaty must have known that war was inevitable According to Arthur Wellesley, the treaty of Bassein was made "with a cipher"

The expected happened The Maratha chiefs gave expression to their feelings of resentment and anger Scindhia and Bhonsla at once combined Gaekwad and Holkar stood apart Scindhia and Bhonsla attacked, but they met with stiff resistance, at the hands of the British troops, The important battles were fought at Assaye, Aragaon and Laswari The power of both Scindhia and Bhonsla was smashed and they both entered into separate treaties

The treaty of Deogaon was made with the Raja of Berar and that of Surji Arjangaon was made with Scindhia By the treaty of Deogon, Bhonsla gave Cuttack to the English and accepted a subsidiary alliance By the treaty of Surji Arjangaon, Scindhia accepted a subsidiary alliance and surrendered Broach, Ahmednagar and the territory between the Ganges and the Jamuna including Agra and Delhi

Holkar had his differences with Scindhia and consequently did not join hands with him when the latter was fighting against the British But when Scindhia and Bhonsla were defeated, Holkar made up his mind to continue the fight He attacked the territories of the Rajputs and demanded Chauth from the English Company, As was to be expected, Wellesley rejected those demands and war was declared Holkar forced Colonel Monson to retreat and inflicted upon him a crushing defeat in Rajputana The Raja of Bharatpur defied British authority He also joined Holkar in an attack on Delhi, but their attempt failed Later on, Holkar himself was defeated The efforts of Lake to conquer Bharatpur failed and he suffered heavy losses Lake made peace with the Raja of Bharatpur When such was the condition, Lord Wellesley was called back by the Home Government which was tired of his aggressive an expensive wars

Lord Wellesley was one of the greatest of the Governor-General of the English Company He has rightly been called a great proconsul One cannot help recalling to one's mind the great work done by him In 1798, the position of the English Company was precarious By 1805, Wellesley had foiled all the designs of the French, defeated and killed Tipu and humbled the Marathas Had he been given a little more time, he would have completely crushed the resistance of Holkar

Dr V A Smith gives his estimate of Wellesley in these words "The Marquess of Wellesley is undoubtedly entitled to a place in the front rank of the Governor-General by the side of Warren Hastings, Marques, of Hastings and Lord Dalhousie Some authors would award him the first place, but in my judgment that honour belongs to Warren Hastings Lord Wellesley, like Lords Lytton and Dufferin in later times, looked upon the affairs of India as seen by a British nobleman and politician from a Foreign Office point of view He was a statesman rather than an administrator, concerned chiefly with matters of high policy and little inclined to examine closely the details of departmental administration His policy was directed to two main objects The first was the elevation of the British Government to the position of paramount power in India, or to use his stately words, 'to establishing a comprehensive system of alliance and political relation over, every region of Hindustan and the Deccan' The second object was the full utilisation of Indian strength so that it might play a proper part in resistance to the menace of Napoleon's worldwide ambition, which avowedly aimed at the overthrow of British power in the whole of India"

According to Lord Curzon, "There hardly exists in the gallery of British celebrities a man upon whose

character and achievements more opposite verdicts have been passed, or whose career more fairly justifies such a clash of opinion One class of writers has seen in Wellesley the courageous and farsighted architect of the empire, who carried out and expanded the great work of Warren Hastings and reared the central edifice, lofty and strong, of British dominion in the East The opposite School regards him, if not as the 'brilliant incapacity' of Croker, at any rate as embodiment of vanity in high places, the 'Sultanised Englishmen' of machintosh, who, by an excess of arrogance and self-esteem failed in India, as later in England, to attain the goal which his self-confident ambition had marked out for him The truth does not lie midway between these extremes It is to be found in both of them Wellesley was at the same time both great and small, a man of noble conceptions and petty conceits, a prescient builder of empire and a rather laughable person

On the Indian side of his career the balance is, however, decidedly in his favour, and if his letters had not been published, which reveal him in his most petulant as well as in his most majestic moods, the credit balance would probably have been even larger Again, "Many of Wellesley's enterprises in India, apart front the Mysore and other campaigns, which added so much both to the glory and the territory of the empire, and which incidentally laid the foundations of his younger brother's fame, were characterised both by wisdom and imagination But there was always a flavour of self-advertisement about them, and they were as a rule too expensive, particularly in a country like India which is liable to such sharp oscillations of policy to be sure of a prolonged existence These remarks apply to his project for a College of Fort William for the education of the young European

cadets, which was first vetoed by the Directors and then only sanctioned in a very modified form, and to his schemes for the encouragement of agriculture and horticulture and the study of the flora and fauna of India "But, unquestionably in all that he did or planned in India Wellesley was actuated by the highest sense of public and personal duty, always operating, however, as a gracious dispensation from a benign Providence, His administration was conscientious, laborious and upright, and was untouched by any of those public scandals that had disfigured the reign of some of his predecessors Even his pomp and show were dicated by the desire to full justice to a great station and a supreme responsibility "

According to Warren Hastings, "Lord Wellesley has constructed a political system of vast strength and extent, but of a weight which will require that it should be continually upheld by an arm as strong as his, but that if they nominate a successor to him, of abilities much inferior to him, and of an activity of mind not equal to his, the whole structure will fall to pieces and all that we formerly possessed be lost in the same ruin " Again, "The Governor-General has committed the heinous crime of using expressions of Ridicule and Contempt about the Company at his table and the words have been carried home If I were in his confidence, I would tell him that civility costs little "

According to Lord Holland, Wellesley had more genius than prudence, more spirit than principle, and manifestly despised his colleagues as much as they dread him Unlike most English politicians, he was rather a statesman than a man of business, and more capable of doing extraordinary things well, than conducting ordinary transactions with safety or propriety " Again, "Yet there was a smack, a fancy of

greatness in all he did, and though in his speeches, his manners and his actions he was very open to ridicule, those who smiled and even laughed could not despise him ”

According to Alfred Lyall, Wellesley crushed in a single brief campaign the Sultan of Mysore, he disarmed and disbanded the formidable corps d'armes of fourteen thousand sepoys under French officers that was mantained by the Nizam, he took possession of the Carnatic, annexed half the dominions of the Oudh vizier, forced all the great military States into subjection or subsidiary alliance, and by completely breaking down the power of the Maratha confederacy he removed the last important obstacle to the accomplishment of our undisputed supremacy

“We may regard with just admiration the high qualities shown by the Governor-General in the prosecution of this magnificent career, his rapid apprehension of a complicated political situation, and the vigour and address with which he carried out not only military operations and diplomatic strokes, but also the reforms of internal administration, and the organization of government in the ceded or conquered provinces No man was ever a better subject for panegyric, nor is it worthwhile to scan too closely, at this distance of time, the defects of a great public servant by whose strenuous qualities the nation has very largely profited It is essential, however, to lay stress, for historical purposes, on the peculiar combination of circumstances which gave scope and encouragement to Lord Wellesley's ardent and masterful statesmanship, and which enabled him to treat those who opposed him or criticized him with the supreme contempt that his home correspondence inability discloses, he had left England and reached India in the darkest hour of the fierce struggle

between the French and English nations, when Bonaparte's star was in the ascendant over Europe, when he was invading Egypt and meditating Asiatic conquests, and when at home a powerful Tory Ministry was governing by measures that would in these days be denounced as the most arbitrary coercion At such a conjuncture there was little time or inclination to look narrowly into Wellesley's declarations that the intrigues of the French in India and the incapacity or disaffection of the native rulers reduced him to the necessity of dethroning or disarming them, and that for our rule to be secure it must be paramount As a matter of fact, he was applauded and supported in measures many times more high-handed and dictatorial than those for which Hastings had been impeached a dozen years earlier During that interval the temper of the English Parliament had so entirely charged, that he could afford to ride roughshod over all opposition in India, and to regard the pacific Directors of the East India Company as a pack of narrow-minded old women'

To quote Lyall again, "The avowed object of Lord Wellesley had been to enforce peace throughout India, and to provide for the permanent security of the British possessions by imposing upon every native State the authoritative superiority of the British Government, binding them down forcibly or through friendly engagement to subordinate relations with a paramount power and effectively forestalling any future attempts to challenge our exercise of arbitration or control In short, whereas up to his time the British Government had usually dealt with all States in India upon a footing of at least nominal political equality, Lord Wellesley revived and proclaimed the imperial principle of political supremacy All his views and measures pointed towards the reconstruction of

another empire in India, which he rightly believed to be the natural outcome of our position in the country, and the only guarantee of its lasting consolidation It must be acknowledged that Wellesley's trenchant operations only accelerated the sure and irresistible consequences of establishing a strong civilized government among the native States that had risen upon the ruins of the Moghul empire, for by swift means or slow, by fair means or forcible, the British dominion was certain to expand, and the armed opposition of its rivals could not fail to be beaten down at each successive collision with a growing European power"

Lord Cornwallis was sent to India for the second time with the object of undoing the mischief which Lord Wellesley was considered to have done He came to India with the determination to revert to, the policy of nonintervention He tried to end the hostilities with Holkar and pacify Scindhia He decided to restore Gwalior and Gohud to Scindhia He also decided to give up all territory west of the Jamuna and withdraw the protection of the English Company from the Rajput States However, Cornwallis could not carry out his policy as he died in October, 1805 He was in India for a few months only

When Lord Cornwallis died in 1805, Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Governor-General's Council, was appointed the Governor-General Like a typical civil servant, Sir George Barlow strictly followed the policy of non-intervention He gave back Gwalior and Gohud to Scindhia He withdrew British protection from the Rajputs He also agreed to fix the Chambal river as the boundary line between Scindhia's territory and the possessions of the English Company He also offered very advantageous terms to Holkar although his position had become very weak on

account of the action of Lord Lake He was asked to enter into a subsidiary alliance

However, Sir George Barlow forced the Nizam to abide by the terms of the subsidiary alliance and refused to allow him to make any alteration The directors of the English Company asked Sir George Barlow to withdraw from the treaty of Bassein and allow the Peshwa to resume his old position However, he resisted the orders of the Directors and the treaty of Bassein continued

Another event of Sir George Barlow's tenure of office was the mutiny of the sepoys at Vellore, Certain orders had been passed demanding the putting on of certain kinds of military uniforms New regulations also prescribed the fashion of wearing the hair The people considered it to be an interference into their 'religious affairs British officers were massacred Lord William Bentinck, the Governor of Madras, could not handle the situation satisfactorily and was consequently recalled

Lord Minto succeeded Sir George Barlow in 1807 Before coming to India as Governor-General, Minto was the President of Board of Control He came to India with the firm conviction that the policy of nonintervention was in the best interests of the English Company However, he had to modify his policy in certain cases

In 1809, a Pathan chief called Amir Khan invaded Berar and he had with him 40,000 horsemen and more than 20,000 Pindaris The British Government had no obligation, moral or legal, to help Berar because the Raja had refused to enter into a subsidiary alliance with the Company In spite of this Lord Minto intervened to put an end to the anarchy in the country Amir Khan was defeated and turned out from

Berar and thus peace was maintained In 1809, Lord Minto entered into the Treaty of Amritsar with Maharaja Ranjit Singh Sir Charles Metcalfo played the most important part in this connection The Sikh territory was to be on the other side of the Sutlej This treaty was observed by both the parties for 30 long years

John Malcolm was sent by Lord Wellesley to Tehran on account of its critical position The Home Government also sent Sir Harford Jones to do the same job The Indian Government accepted the treaty entered, into by the envoy of the Crown

Elphinstone was sent to Kabul on a similar mission However, he Shah Shuja, the King of Afghanistan, at Peshawar, He, agreed to oppose the French and the Persians if they attacked India However, not much came out of it because Shah Shuja was himself turned out from his country

Lord Minto took up the offensive against the French He sent a naval expedition against the French colonies of Bourbon and Maurit us These islands were captured Another expedition was sent to Java

In 1813, the Charter of the English East India Company was renewed for 20 years The same year Lord Minto was succeeded by Lord Hastings

According to Lord Curzon, "Lord Minto was one, of the class of Governors-General who leave no particular mark on history and cease to be remembered either for good or ill Coming out to pursue the policy of peaceful isolation which had been unsuccessfully practised by his immediate predecessors, he soon found himself driven into courses which even Wellesley would have approved "

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# Peshwas

The difficulties of Sahu and the great political unrest of Maharashtra are the chief factors in the rise of the Peshwas Their rise is neither phenomenal nor accidental They gradually worked their way up from an ordinary position to the headship of the State and eventually to *de facto* sovereignty Balaji Vishwanath is the founder of the House of the Peshwas, who made the office hereditary in their family, paralysed the power of their colleagues and ultimately that of the king To start with, they occupied a rank second to the Pratinidhi's They had first to sweep him aside before they could make their position supreme in the State, and once supreme in the State, the king automatically yielded place to them And all these they achieved on account of their superior ability Thus in the attainment of supremacy they had first to eclipse the Pratinidhi and the rest of their colleagues, and then the king These two phases should be clearly noticed as the reader proceeds with the narrative, for this transfer of authority from the masters to the servant is so gradually, silently, caiefully accomplished that the successive steps important as they were in relation to the whole move, escaped all contemporary notice ”

***Balaji Vishwanath***

Balaji Vishwanath enjoyed the trust and confidence of his master, Sahu, and no wonder he was appointed to the post of Senakarte or Organiser of Forces Balaji's

ancestors were Deshmukhs He himself was employed as a clerk in the salt works at Chiplun In 1689, he worked as a revenue clerk and later on was appointed as Sar-Subah of Poona and Daulatbad He seems to have come into contact with the Mughals and Sahu about 1705 Sahu had a very high opinion of the ability, loyalty and character of Balaji The latter was one of those persons who joined Satin after his release He also played a very important part in crushing the opposition to Sahu

Taking full advantage of the dissensions and intrigues at the Mughal court at Delhi, the Marathas gained strength and influence In 1719, Balaji Vishwanath was invited to Delhi to help the Sayyad Brothers Although Farrukh Sayyar was killed in 1719, Balaji Vishwanath got three grants from Mohammad Shah, the new Mughal emperor The three grants are considered to be the foundation-stone of the great fabric of the Maratha empire in India The first grant gave to the Marathas the right of Chauth or one-fourth share of the revenues of the Deccan and Southern India including Hyderabad, the Karnatak and Mysore The second grant gave the right of Sardeshmukhi or one-tenth share of the produce over and above the Chauth The third grant recognised the right of Swaraj or the entire sovereignty of the Marathas over their country Sahu was not to molest Sambhaji of Kolhapur and he was to pay an annual tribute of Rs 10 lakhs to the Mughal emperor The emperor was to release And send back from Delhi Sahu's mother, his wife, his brother and the members of the Maratha royal family detained at Delhi

According to Dr Sinha, "This journey of the Marathas to Delhi produced far-reaching consequences in their history Besides its immediate advantages it deeply coloured the later policy of the Marathas, and

came as an eye-opener to them in many respects For long the Marathas, who had looked upon the imperial power and prestige with awe, witnessed at Delhi what that power actually meant The halo of glory that surrounded the names of the descendants of Babar and Akbar, whom the president of Fort William addressed as 'the Absolute Monarch and Prop of the Universe', vanished into the lurid light of utter contempt when the Marathas found them reduced to were tools at the hands of the unscrupulous courtiers, and dragged to dishonour and ignominious death Delhi reeking with blood, courtiers thriving in machination, the emperor an instrument of the ambitious nobles, the central authority levelled to the dustall these revealed the realities about the Mughal empire Long before, their great king Shivaji had proved to his people that the Mughal army was not invincible, and the Mughal territory not inviolable Further they had been sufficiently disillusioned with regard to the real strength of the Mughals during their War of, Independence (1690-1707) Now they realized full well that the Mughal empire was rotten to the core, that it could never sustain its pristine glory and perhaps, who knows It might fall to the powerful blows of the Marathas Balaji Vishwanath, a shrewd man of affairs as he was, must have seen with the eyes of a statesman that the splendid structure of the Mughal empire was tottering to its fall, and was a prize worth attempting, and worth fighting for He and his other Maratha leaders must have conjured up a glorious picture of Hindustan, the homeland of Hinduism and the treasure house of Asia, a land consecrated by a thousand memories of Shri Ram and Shri Krishna so dear to the Hindu heart This holy land, this rich country, they must have thought, would be theirs, if they could but overthrow the Mughals And then what a difference it would make to Maharashtra

Maharashtra, sterile and rugged, where "nature enforces a spartan simplicity, would flow in riches, milk and honey The gorgeous paraphernalia of the nobles, the polished luxury of the inhabitants, their graceful manners and customs, health and beauty, bearing and speech, all testifying to a cultured society, the verdant plains of the Ganges and the Jumna, the flower and foliage, the delightful sun and shade—all these must have captivated the eyes and imagination of the rough, crude but intelligent Chitpavan Brahmin, Balaji Vishwanath"

"And was this all? The prestige of their presence at the imperial capital, not as mercenaries, but as the allies and supporters of the kingmakers held out to them a promise that they might some day make and un-make emperors Indeed it was the surest basis on which Balaji Vishwanath could confidently build his policy of founding a Maratha empire on the ruins of the Mughal empire"

Balaji Vishwanath was able to accomplish a lot for the Marathas When he came to power, he found his country torn with a civil war, but he left it peaceful and prosperous He won for his people Shivaji's Swarajya from the Mughals without a battle and he impressed the Mughal capital with the prestige of the Maratha arms He strengthened the position of Sahu on his throne At a time when the Maratha chiefs were playing a waiting game and loyalty was a rare commodity, he by his devotion and sincerity, was able to win the confidence of Sahu and the respect of the people

Balaji Vishwanath laid the foundations of the future *Maratha Confederacy* He was helped in this task by the circumstances prevailing at that time As a result of the Deccan wars of Aurangzeb, the Mughal

empire was completely disintegrated and that helped the Marathas to acquire the right of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the six Subahs of the Deccan The Maratha State set up by Shivaji was also completely destroyed and the system of Jagirs, came into existence in Maharashtra Both these factors changed the very nature of the Maratha State and laid the foundations of the Maratha Confederacy

When Shivaji created the Astapradhans, he paid their salaries in cash There were no jagirs and no hereditary offices No change was made by Sambhaji, his son It was during the time of Rajaram that a change was made in the old system Rajaram decided to follow a policy of systematically plundering the Mughal territories and for that purpose he assigned the different parts of the Deccan to his commanders or those who fessed obedience to him Thus the Maratha commanders harassed the Mughals in every possible way Rajaram allowed them to establish their headquarters in their own areas and also to rule over them Out of their revenues, the commanders paid a share to Rajaram and kept the rest to themselves They acted on their own initiative and did not depend upon Rajaram for anything except the grant of territory to them They considered the parts of the country granted to them as their Jagirs which were won and maintained by them entirely by their own strength The commanders did whatever suited their interests and were not in any way obedient to Rajaram They took pride in their independence This system continued not only under Rajaram but also under Tara Bai and Sahu It is pointed out that the Sawants of Wadi, Kanhoji Angre, Damaji Thorat, etc did not care for the authority of Tara Rai or Sahu When after 1707, Sahu wanted to strengthen his hands, he had to ask for the help of the Maratha chiefs

who held big jagirs under him These Jargirdars supported Sahu on the condition that their Jagirs were not to be touched As a matter of fact, when Sahu came out victorious, he gave more jagirs to those who had helped him The policy of Sahu was not to change anything that was old and not to create anything that was new The result was that the old jagirs were allowed to remain in the bands of their holders Had he tried to confiscate their jagirs, that might have resulted in trouble All the high officials surrounding Sahu themselves had big jagirs and obviously they were not prepared to part with the same Balaji Vishwanath himself had huge jagirs and no wonder he did not raise his finger to abolish the system of jagirs These jagirs had become hereditary

The grant of the right of collecting chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six Subahs of the Deccan to the Marathas by the Mughals in 1719 also favoured the growth of the Maratha Confederacy The Marathas were given the right of collecting the above taxes but they were also required to maintain peace and order in their territories That seemed to be a very big job for the Marathas Balaji solved the problem by dividing the different parts of the Deccan excluding the Swarajya to the various jagirdars of feudatories, ministers of state or his favourites Balaji himself was to collect money from Khandesh and parts of Balaghat He assigned Balgam and Gujarat to the Senapati He gave portions of Gondwana, the Pairighat and Berar to Senasaheb Subah Kanhoji Bhonsla He gave Gangathadi and Aurangabad to the Sarlaskar He gave the Karnatic to Fateh Singh Bhonsla He gave Hyderabad, Bedar and the territories between the Nira and Warna to the Pratinidhi The above officials were allowed to collect Chauth and Sardeshmukhi front their territories They were allowed to keep a part of

the revenues for the maintenance of their establishments and send the rest to the royal treasury They were independent in their territories to all intents and purposes They were not in any way subordinate to the Peshwa or Sahu They collected a lot of money from the territories assigned to them and thereby added to their resources The possession of a lot of money and large armies enabled them to think in terms of their independence and to all intents and purposes they were actually independent It was under these circumstances that the State formed by Balaji Vishwanath was later on called Maratha Confederacy The nature of the confederacy remained, the same The only change made later on was that with the conquest of the various parts of India by the Marathas the territories under the Maratha commanders became larger and in the same proportion they began to assert their independence more and more

The financial arrangements made by Balaji Vishwanath also made the Peshwa and Sahu dependent upon the Maratha military leaders They had to depend upon the money which they were to get from the Maratha chiefs According to Dr Sinha, "The king lived as a pensioner of the feudatories, expecting only his 25% besides the Sardeshmukhi income The military power had passed out of his hands and by this arrangement he was made dependent on the big Sardars for the maintenance of his office Balaji did not realise the gravity of this mistake and he further weakened the position of the king by making it a rule that the different establishments of the royal households should be maintained by different Sardars, The Sardars and the Astapradhans like the Bhonsla and Angre were called upon to maintain the royal establishments by monthly payments The Sachiv had to pay for the upkeep of the royal stables he

Pratinidhi had to pay for that of the royal stores, and the Peshwa, for that of the royal palaces The officers appointed to see whether every feudatory was sending his contribution every month regularly or not was called the Rajajnya, This arrangement rendered the king only a pensioner of the feudatories in all but name The discredit of having thus undermined the strength of royal authority goes to Balaji Vishwanath "

Sir Richard Temple has described the character and achievements of Balaji Vishwanath in these words "He was more like a typical Brahmin than any of his successors He had a calm, comprehensive and commanding intellect, an imaginative and aspiring disposition, an aptitude for ruling rude nature by moral force, a genius for diplomatic combinations ice His political destiny propelled him into affairs and a master of final wherein his misery must have been acute More than once, he was threatened with death for which he doubtlessly prepared himself with all the stoicism of his race´when a ransom opportunity arrived He wrung by power of menace and argument from the Mughals, a recognition of Maratha sovereignty He carried victoriously all his diplomatic points and sank into premature death with the consciousness that a Hindu empire had been created over the ruins of Muhammedan power and that of this empire the hereditary chiefship had been secured for his family "

According to Sardesai "The services and achievements of this first Peshwa have not yet received proper recognition in history, since they are matters of only recent research Sahu in one of his letters styles him *atula parakrami-sevaka* i e , 'a servant, of incomparable capacity', showing thereby that sahu did not bestow his Peshwaship on a mere clerk in the employee of the Senapati but on a worthy

person of proved merit after a full trial of 5 years and a close personal acquaintance going back to a much longer period In fact, although sufficient details of this first Peshwa's life and work have not yet been discovered, we have enough ground for asserting that his father and grandfather had been in Shivaji's service, that he possessed long and varied experience obtained by him during the Mughal-Maratha struggle and consequently a secure grasp of the circumstances and the situation in which Sahu and the whole nation came to be placed upon the death of Aurangzeb He also evinced rare foresight and statesmanship in utilizing all available resources towards completing the task of constructing a Hindu empire, which the Great Shivaji had set before himself and which had all but crumbled away during the troubles of the two proceeding reigns Balaji had to look to the north as his path to the south was permanently closed by the independent existence of Tarabai's kingdom "

***Baji Rao***

After the death of Balaji Vishwanath, his eldest son, Baji Rao, was appointed the Peshwa by Sahu This was done in spite of the opposition of his advisers and chiefs At the time of coming to power, Baji Rao was hardly a youngman of 19 In spite of his youth, Baji Rao possessed plenty of commonsense, intelligence and very good physique He was well-versed in diplomacy and administration He correctly came to the conclusion that the Mughal power was declining and it was possible to snatch away the provinces from it Baji Rao made the following observation in that connection "Now is our time to drive the strangers from the country of the Hindus, and acquire immortal renown Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree, and the branches will fall off themselves By directing our efforts to Hindustan the Maratha flag shall fly from

the Krishna to Attock," Sahu approved of his policy in these words "You shall plant it beyond the Himalayas You aye, indeed, a noble son of a worthy father " Baji Rao reorganised the armies of the State and started his campaigns in 1731 The Marathas' claim to Chauth and Sardeshmukhi was recognised in that year In 1732 the Maratha armies overran the province of Malwa Bundelkhand was conquered, and in 1737, Baji Rao appeared before the very walls of Delhi Nizam-ul-Mulk advanced from the Deccan to help the Mughal emperor, but he himself was defeated near Bhopal and had to agree to a formal cession of Malwa and Gujrat, According to Dr Dighe, "The victory of Bhopal marks the zenith of the Peshwa's triumphant career By defeating the confederate armies at Bhopal, the Peshwa established the supremacy of Maratha arms in India and announced the birth of a New Imperial Power " The Nizam also promised to pay a war indemnity of Rs 50 lakhs to Baji Rao In 1739, the Island of Bassein was taken from the Portuguese, Baji Rao died in 1740 after putting the Maratha power on secure footing

Baji Rao loved a Muslim dancing girl named Mastani She was an exceedingly accomplished lady and was the most charming lady of her time in India She was a good musician and looked after Baji Rao like a devoted wife It is said that Baji Rao's addiction to meat and wine was due to her influence Both of them died in 1740

All his life Baji Rao tried to accomplish two things He tried to expand the Maratha power in the north and also tried to ensure harmonious cooperation of the Maratha Confederacy by a process of interdependence of its various members As pointed out above, he succeeded in his mission of extending the Maratha power in the north but in his second mission

person of proved merit after a full trial of 5 years and a close personal acquaintance going back to a much longer period In fact, although sufficient details of this first Peshwa's life and work have not yet been discovered, we have enough ground for asserting that his father and grandfather had been in Shivaji's service, that he possessed long and varied experience obtained by him during the Mughal-Maratha struggle and consequently a secure grasp of the circumstances and the situation in which Sahu and the whole nation came to be placed upon the death of Aurangzeb He also evinced rare foresight and statesmanship in utilizing all available resources towards completing the task of constructing a Hindu empire, which the Great Shivaji had set before himself and which had all but crumbled away during the troubles of the two proceeding reigns Balaji had to look to the north as his path to the south was permanently closed by the independent existence of Tarabai's kingdom "

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Baji Rao was a great general and soldier He possessed an indomitable courage and extraordinary personal bravery, He was incomparable as a soldier No amount of hardship or fatigue was too much for his iron constitution In guerilla warfare, he had no equal He was next only to Shivaji The way he humbled the pride of Nizam-ul-Mulk shows his ability He inspired his followers with confidence and commanded their loyalty He led them from victory to victory His mobility and brilliant tactics were responsible for his success His originality of plan, boldness of execution and eye for strategy show that he was a great commander He stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries in Maharashtra He had the head to plan and the hand to execute

It is not necessary to write separately about Baji Rao's character and achievements His deeds speak for him He stands next only to Shivaji in a military genius Sahu, discernment in selecting him for the Peshwaship at the early age of nineteen was more than justified That a boy in his teens assuming the highest position under the Maratha Chhatrapati, should be able within twenty years to, extend the Maratha dominion in all directions, north, south, east and west and to overcome great antagonists both at home and abroad is an, achievement which stands to the permanent credit of the Maratha race Twenty years spent in breathless activity and tireless journeys across the Indian continent from Srirangpattam to Delhi and from Ahmedabad to Hyderabad, wore out the iron constitution of this great man of action The twenty years of his active career witnessed a complete revolution in the character of the Maratha State and an entire redistribution of political power throughout India At his death in 1740 the political centre of gravity shifted from the Court of Delhi to that of Sahu

The system introduced by Baji Rao's father and executed by him and his son, equally 'transformed the constitution laid down by Shivaji and dotted the map of India with numerous centres of Maratha power Thus Baji Rao became the creator of greater Maharashtra"

Sir Richard Temple has summed up the character of Baji Rao in these words "Baji Rao was hardly surpassed as a rider and was ever forward in action, eager to expose himself under fire if the affair was arduous He was endured to fatigue and prided himself in enduring the same hardship as his soldiers and shared their scanty fare He was moved by ardour for success in national undertakings by a patriotic confidence in the Hindu cause as against its old enemies Mohammedans and its new rival Europeans, then rising above the political horizon He lived to see the Marathas spread terror over the Indian continent from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal He died as he had lived in camp under canvas among, his men and he is remembered to this day among the Marathas as the fighting Peshwa and an incarnation of Hindu energy"

He was the most remarkable man next to Shivaji himself that his nation had produced In the words of the historian of the Marathas, his was 'the head to plan and the hand to execute, Tall and commanding in appearance he was like all his family, famous for his good looks He was equally great as a soldier and as a statesman, He understood to perfection the peculiar tactics of the Maratha horse, and his campaigns against the Nizam were masterpieces of strategy He was as chivalrous in the hour of victory as he was brave in the field As politician he had the lofty and far-reaching ambitions of his father, and he lived to see the tiny Maratha race once 'a cloud no

bigger than a man's hand', spread all over India, from Delhi to Tanjore He was an eloquent and inspiring orator, and if in private life he had something of the haughty and imperious reserve of the Chitpavan, he was a generous master to those who served him faithfully "

Despie his great talents as a soldier and a leader of men, Baji Rao lacked some of the sterling qualities of a statesman, He was domineering in his attitude towards others and overbearing in his manners He was a soldier to the core, and could never bear opposition Fortunately, he possessed resourcefulness in plenty, and, therefore, he could bear down all opposition It is said that he had the head to plats and the hand to execute True, but too much masterfulness cuts at the root of statesmanship, A little elasticity of temper adds salt to statecraft Hence Baji Rao made many enemies in his lifetime, and left as many behind He did not know how to conciliate He knew how to domineer But domination even when dictated by absolutely selfless or disinterested motives antagonises people more often than we suppose, and Baji Rao's domination was not disinterested There is no gainsaying the fact that he was deeply imbued with a love of self-glory though he was also deeply loyal to his chief Satin and to the cause of his country He firmly believed that all he did, was for the good of Maharashtra and that his lead was not only desirable but indispensable Naturally he gave offence to many by such an attitude as this At the beginning of his regime he met with much opposition and as he succeeded in overcoming it step by step he gained greater and greater self-confidence His brilliant victories made him a terror to his enemies and a trustworthy friend to Sahu His attitude towards the Maratha Confederacy was stern and unrelenting He

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the extremity of the Peninsula all the territory within those limits which was not their own paid tribute "

*Third Battle of Panipat (1761)* The conquest and occupation of the Punjab by the Marathas brought them into conflict with Ahmed Shah Abdali who started from Afghanistan to recover the same from the Marathas, The Marathas were also ready to meet him, and thus the famous Battle of Panipat was fought in January 1761 Ahmad Shah, Abdali had under his command about 40,000 cavalry and 35,000 infantry Sadasiva Bhao had under his command 55,000 cavalry, 15,000 infantry and 15,000 Pandaris Both sides had artillery and other auxiliaries Sadasiva Bhao was proud of his artillery strength and against the advice of his generals, decided to fight a pitched battle Abdali was able to cut off the lines of communication of the Marathas To begin with, the Marathas had the upper hand, but later on the Afghans carried the day Sadasiva Bhao was killed, Visvas Rao, the son of the Peshwa, was also killed Malhar Rao Holkar saved his life by running away from the battle-field Mahadji Scindhia was able to save his life but he became lame There was a terrible loss of life among the Marathas The losses of the Marathas army were reported to the Peshwa in these words "Two Pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold mohars have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be reckoned " The news was received by Balaji Baji Rao when he was coming to Panipat with reinforcements However, he was too late He retired brokenhearted to Poona and died in 1761, a few days later

There is no unanimity of opinion among the historians with regard to the effects of the Battle of Panipat in 1764 "Notwithstanding the terrible losses in manpower suffered on that field by Marathas, the

disaster decided nothing In fact, it pushed forward in the distant sequal two prominent members of the dominant race Nana Phadnavis and Mahadji Scindhia, both miraculously escaping death on that fatal day, who resuscitated that power to its former glory The disaster of Panipat was indeed like a natural visitation destroying life, but leading to no decisive political consequences To maintain that the disaster of Panipat put an end to the dreams of supremacy cherished by the Marathas, is to misunderstand the situation as recorded in contemporary documents "

However, this view is not accepted by other historians According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "A dispassionate survey of Indian history will show how unfounded this (Maratha) chauvinistic claim is A Maratha army did, no doubt, restore the exiled Mughal emperor to the capital of his fathers in 1772, but they came then not as kingmakers, but as the dominators of the Mughal empire and the real masters of his nominal ministers and generals That proud position was secured by Mahadji Scindhia only in 1789 and by the British in 1803 " There is a lot to be said for this view The battle of Panipat was a decisive battle The flower of the Maratha army was cut off After this battle, the Maratha dream of establishing the empire over the whole of India vanished The Maratha defeat had a great demoralising effect The Indians after 1761 felt that they could not depend upon the protection and friendship of the Marathas On account of the death of most of the Maratha captains and statesmen, the pam was left open for the "guilty ambition of Raghunath Dada, the most infamous character in Maratha history Other losses time could have made good, but this was the greatest mischief done by the debacle at Panipat ", The internal dissensions in the Peshwa family were responsible for the weakening of the Maratha power It

is this fact which helped the English to rise to power To quote Sardesai, "It is significant that while the two combatants, the Marathas and the Mussalmans were locked in deadly combat on the field of ancient Kurukshetra, Clive, the first founder of the British empire in India, was on his way to England to explain the feasibility of his dreams of an Indian empire to the Great Commoner, Lord Chatham' the then Prime Minister Panipat indirectly ushered in a new participant in the struggle for Indian supremacy This is indeed the direct outcome of that historical event, which on that account marks a turning point in the history of India "

The Third Battle of Panipat "decided the fate of India " "The Marathas and the Mohammedans weakened each other in that deadly conflict, facilitating the aims of the British for Indian supremacy " Again, "If Plassey had sown the seeds of British supremacy in India, Panipat afforded time for the maturing and striking roots "

According to Elphinstone, "Never was a defeat more complete, and never was there a calamity that diffused so much consternation Grief and despondency spread over the whole Maratha people, most had to mourn relations and all felt the destruction of the army as a deathblow to their national greatness The Peshwa never recovered the shock He slowly retreated from his frontier towards Poona and died in a temple which he had himself erected near that city The wreck of the army retired beyond the Narbada,, evacuating almost all their acquisitions in Hindustan Dissensions soon broke out after the death of Balaji and the government of the Peshwa never recovered its vigour Most of the Maratha conquests were recovered at a subsequent period, but it was by independent chiefs, with the aid of European officers and disciplined

sepoys The Confederacy of the Maratha princes dissolved on the cessation of their common danger

***Causes of Maratha Defeat***

The defeat of the Marathas was due to many causes Almad Shah Abdali had a stronger military force than that of the Marathas Sadasiva Bhao, the commander of the Maratha forces, was no match for Ahmad Shah Abdali who was admittedly the ablest Asiatic general of his time The latter was a general par excellence After the death of Vishwasrao, he plunged into the battlefield like an ordinary soldier and lost his life Sadasiva Bhao could not maintain his lines of communication with Delhi The result was that for two months before the battle, the Maratha army was practically starving The Marathas fought with hungry bellies in the battlefield The Marathas had alienated the sympathies of the Rajputs and the Jats and consequently they could not rely upon anybody's support No wonder, nobody raised his finger in defence of the Marathas The troops of Ahmad Shah Abdali were better armed than those of the Peshwa While the Marathas had lances and swords, the Afghans were armed with muskets In the hand to hand fight, the Maratha artillery could not play its part but the Afghan muskets helped the Afghans to win the battle While the Afghans possessed discipline of a very high order, the Marathas lacked the same They were individualists and refractory They hated discipline with the hatred of lesser breeds without law' They, extolled lawless caprice as liberty and howled against discipline, self-control and organised teamwork of a true army or schools as the mark of a 'slave mentality' and the destroyer of their clan The ill-disciplined Marathas lost the day to the well organised and well disciplined Afghan troops

Raghunathrao failed to maintain order and discipline among the Maratha agents in the north Holkar failed to restrain Najib Khan from doing mischief The Peshwa failed to go to the north and adjust matters when it was yet time to mend them Bhau Saheb failed to keep women and noncombatants behind at Bharatpur or at Delhi As soon as the to armies came face to face, Bhau should have at once attacked and maintained communications with his base at Delhi After the death of Vishvasrao, Bhau Saheb should Dot have rushed headlong into the fight Most of the Maratha horses had died on account of starvation in the camp at Pampat and the Marathas had to fight without their horses They were accustomed to fight only with their horses and not without them and no wonder they failed Sardesai thinks that it is wrong to say that the Marathas lost the battle of Panipat because they gave up guerilla warfare

Balaji Bajirao was a man of refined tastes, fond of luxurious life and enjoying splendour and fine arts During his regime, the social life of Maharashtra underwent great changes, in many directions The camp life of the Marathas lost its original rudeness and simplicity The Peshwa was an expert in accounts and penmanship and exercised strict control over receipts and expenditure Public servants were drawn in a special institution of the Secretariat called the Phad The Peshwa used persuasive methods both in diplomacy and war There is no substance in the allegation that he favoured the Brahmans He treated All castes equally, He distributed patronage equally

According to a contemporary writer, "Balajipant Nana secured the affection of the great Chhatrapati Shahu and promoted in the service of the State all those who had been selected and raised to high

positions by his fattier and uncle He encouraged talent wherever he detected it and bestowed titles, gifts and honours upon those who exhibited valour and capacity With a heart pressed towards public welfare, he manned the services with highly qualified individuals Sardars and people undetook adventures and carried out grand conquests His sweet, conciliatory and forgiving ways conquered the hearts even of his enemies His conquests extended from Rameshwar to Indraprasta Nana Saheb and Bhau Saheb were both incarnations of divine qualities

Balaji's character was formed on, the same lines as that of his father and his disposition moved in the same direction But though a man of skilful address, of influence in counsel and of ability in the field, he was inferior to his fattier both as soldier and as a politician He well knew how to utilise the talents of those about him, and some of his greatest successes were won for him by his lieutenants Still he was ever to the front, organizing or supervising, and he saw the Maratha power attain its zenith It was under him that the Maratha cavalry fully one hundred thousand strong could truly boast that they had staked their thirst in every stream that flowed between Cape Comorin and the Himalayas But he did not take, perhaps he was not capable of taking any step for rendering this widely extended dominion advantageous to the people He allowed Maratha rule to continue to be what it had been from the first, more an organization of plunder than a system of administration Personally he was unscrupulous in this respect, morally inferior to his father and grandfather"

According to Grant Duff, "Balaji Bajirao was one of those princes whose good fortune originating in causes anterior to their time obtained in consequences

of national prosperity, a higher degree of celebrity than they may fully merit he was a Plan of considerable political sagacity, of polished manners and of great address The territory under the immediate care of the Peshwa had been in a progressive state of improvement Balajirao appointed fixed Mamlatdars or Subedars each of horn had charge of several districts They had absolute charge of the police, the revenue and the civil and criminal judicature and in most cases had power of life and death The commencement of a better system of administration particularly for Maharashtra is ascribed to Ramchandra Baba Shenwee and after his death Sadashivrao improved on his suggestions A Shastree of respectability named, Balkrishna Gadgil was appointed head of the Poona Nyayadhisi or court of justice and the police was much invigorated at the capital Under the Government of Balajirao, Panchayats, the ordinary tribunals of civil justice, began to improve The Maratha dominion attained its greatest extent under Balajirao's administration and most of the principal Brahman families can only date their rise from that period In short, the condition of the whole population was in his time improved and the Maratha peasantry, sensible of the comparative amelioration which they began to enjoy, have ever since blessed the days of Nana Saheb Peshwa "

Sardesai points out two serious mistakes committed by Balaji Bajirao, In the first place, Balaji made a mistake in taking British help to crush the Maratha navy headed by Angria, his own navy commander Secondly, be neglected to support Bhonsla's claims in Bengal when Siraj-ud-Diula was being hard pressed by the British before the battle of Plassey (1757) Bengal had been acquired by Raghunathji and subjected to the annual payment of

Chauth in return for which the Marathas were bound to help, its Subedar When the Englishmen turned their arms against Siraj-ud-Daula, it was the duty of the Peshwa to help him In 1776, the position of the Peshwa was secure At that time, he was the most powerful ruler in India A move on his part against the British, both in Karnatak and in Bengal, would have at once checked their advance Unfortunately, the Peshwa paid undue attention to the politics of Delhi and contracted unnecessary enmity with Ahmad Shah Abdali and brought about the disaster of Panipat in 1761 He had no business to go beyond the Sutlej into the Punjab It appears that the Peshwa did not understand the real nature of the British game and side-tracked his attention to the Punjab He was found wanting in sagacity and length of vision at a crucial moment If he had understood all-India politics, he would have acted otherwise The result of his folly was that the Britishers were able to establish themselves in Bengal, Oudh and the Deccan

**Madhavrao I (1761-72)**

Peshwa Balajirao left behind two sons, Madhavrao and Narayanrao, and one brother Raghunathrao Madhavrao, was 16 years old at the time of the death of his father and became the Peshwa His uncle Raghunathrao had hoped to conduct the affairs of the State but that was not tolerated by Madhavrao who is known as the greatest of the Peshwas Although young, he possessed a mature judgment, a high spirit and the talents of both a soldier and a statesman To begin with, there was friction between Madhavrao and Raghunathrao which later oil developed into an open rupture Raghunathrao demanded half the share of the Maratha State Then started a civil war which ended in 1768 in the victory of Madhavrao Raghunathrao was captured and was confined in his palace at Poona

The enemies of the Marathas tried to take advantage of the Maratha defeat in Panipat in 1761 and the civil war in the country Nizam Ali marched with all speed towards Poona but after a struggle for two years he was defeated at Raksasbhuvan and was forced to surrender

On account of Maratha failure at Panipat, Hyder Ali of Mysore tried to extend his influence in the Karnatak and thereby destroyed all traces of Maratha influence in that region The result was that Madhavrao had to spend the best part of his time and resources in capturing his former territories and exacting complete submission from Hyder Ali

The Peshwa also subdued the Bhonslas of Nagpur, and forced them to accept him as the Peshwa and the head of the Maratha State They were also forced to support him against all rivals and enemies The treaty of Kankapur of 1769 with the Bhonslas is known as a masterstroke of Madhavrao's valour and capacity in organising the united power of the Maratha State

The Peshwa also sent a strong expedition under two Maratha and Brahman commanders to restore the Maratha prestige and claims at the court of Delhi which had received a setback after the battle of Panipat Mahadji Scindhia was one of the four leaders who were sent to Delhi They won remarkable success in that undertaking They restored the Mughal emperor to the Delhi throne They humbled the Rohillas and carried out all the commitments usually understood by the terms Hindu-pad-padshahi

Madhavrao improved the moral tone of the Maratha administration Corruption was put down with a heavy hand The revenue system was reformed in the interests of all the people The judiciary began to function efficiently under the famous Ram Shastri

The complaints of the public were welcomed and attended to The wrong doers were punished Many vexatious taxes were removed Definite rules and conditions of service were framed for the jagirdars and their military equipment The system of Veth or exaction of forced labour from the lower classes was abolished Every kind of service had to be paid for in cash Spies were appointed to gather information from all over the country A new generation of honest and efficient officials, clerks, accountants, supervisors, revenue collectors and military suppliers came into existence Commanders had to give up their lethargy and learn obedience A special branch for the manufacture of firearms ancl'ammunition was set up and it worked under the personal supervision of the Peshwa hilpself Madhavrao was not only a great administrator but also a great commander of large armies He often showed exemplary valour and skill in strategy He was a benevolent despot He deioted his whole life to the' service of the people

A mere reference to a large number of great personalities shows that the Peshwa had brought into existence a large number of honest officers Some of them were Ram Shastri, Govind Shivram, Tatya, Naro Appaji, Mahadji Ballal Guruji, Trimbakrao Pethe, Gopalrao Patwardhan, Ramchandra Ganesh, Visaji Krishna, Nana Phadnavis, Moroba and Haripant Phadke

According to Sir Richard Temple, "In some of the characters just depicted there has been found virtue of the secondary type, energy, courage, enthusiasm, patriotism and the like, but in none of them is to be seen virtue of the purer, nobler, loftier quality In Madhavrao there is virtue of the best stamp In trying moments he evinced not only presence of mind but also a proud consciousness that by him an example should

be set to all around He chose ministers with discrimination, some of whom justified his choice by their subsequent achievements He enforced strictness in the service of the State and strove to procure honesty so far as that was procurable in a corrupt age If an instance occurred of bad faith in high place, he would denounce it with a frankness surprising to those who lived in evil times Though obliged to keep the uncle out of positions which afforded opportunities of doing harm, yet he showed the utmost consideration towards his relative When two of his officers during a siege wanted to fight a duel over a quarrel, he told them, instead, to scale a deadly breach, promising to decree in favour of the disputant who should first plant the national Rag upon the rampart His care extended to the fiscal, the judicial, and the general departments, All men in his day knew that the head of the State was personally master of the work, was the friend of the oppressed and the foe of the oppressor, and was choosing agents who would carry out his beneficent orders His thoughtfulness and considerateness were untiring and were often shown in a signal or graceful manner For instance, he conferred benefits upon the descendants of the cavalry leader Santaji Ghorpade, who had been assassinated by Shivaji's son and successor, in order that such tardy justice as might be possible after the lapse of a generation, should be done All the while, he was engaged in war anti politics He bad to hold his own against the Nizam of the Deccan, to drive back Hyder Ali of Mysore, to retrieve that disaster at Panipat which had grieved his father to death While greatly superior to his predecessors as a civil ruler, he was not inferior to them as a warlike commander His lieutenants were just retrieving the Panipat disaster when his own health, always delicate, gave way

"That Madhavrao, a Hindu prince, should have done so much in so brief a life as his, under such disadvantages and despite such temptations that, before being cut off, in the heyday of his career, he should have evinced such capacity as this, not only in affairs susceptible of management by youthful genius, but also in matters ordinarily demanding the experience of ripe, years, is truly astonishing Indeed, he is forever to be revered as the model prince, 'the flos regum' and as one of the finest characters that the Hindu nationality has ever produced!'

Threatened both by domestic and foreign enemies, Madhavrao triumphed signally over all Yet his triumph had him no rest Victorious over his foes he had spent his years in labour to better the condition of his people Every department was quickened by his supervision, his industry and his example His secret intelligence was faultless, and no matter how remote the officer guilty of acts of tyranny, he rarely escaped punishment The Peshwa's armies went well-equipped on service, for 'the entire military organization was under his direct control Quick to anger, he was no less quick to forgive And the, only, fault that the harshest critic can find in this admirable ruler is, that he shortened a life precious to his people by his arduous and unceasing toil " Although the military talents of Madhavrao, were very considerable, his character as a sovereign is entitled to far higher praise and to much greater respect than that of any of his predecessors He is deservedly celebrated for his firm support of the weak against the oppressive, of the poor against the rich, and, as far as the constitution of society admitted, for his equity to all "

**Narayanrao (1772)**

When Madhavrao died of consumption in 1772, he was,

succeeded by his younger brother Narayanrao His uncle Raghunath Rao, who was still in confinement, tried to escape The attempt having failed, he was put under severer vigilance A plot was prepared to make Raghunath Rao the Peshwa and put Narayanrao in confinement However, Narayanrao was cut to pieces in the presence of Raghunath Rao and the latter became the Peshwa, There was a lot of resentment against the cruel murder and the enquiry which was held by Ram Shastri showed that Raghunath Rao was the prime author of the murder, The result was that the responsible ministers and leaders of Maharashtra formed a Council of State known as the Bara Bhai for the conduct of the affairs In 1774, a posthumous son was born to the widow of Narayanrao and he was named Madhavrao Narayan,

**Madhavrao Narayan (1774-95)**

Madhavrao Narayan who is also known as Sawai Madhavrao II was declared the Peshwa and Raghunath Rao had to run away The new Peshwa reigned for 21 years and died in 1795

Although Raghunath Rao had to go into exile, he did not keep quiet He sought the help of the English East India Company and the result was the Maratha War 1 The war dragged on for many years and was ended by the treaty of Salbai in 1782 As a result of that treaty, Raghunath Rao had to give up all claims to the Peshwaship but he was given a pension, During the Maratha War 1, Mahadji Scindhia and Nana Phadnavis distinguished themselves In 1795, the Nizam was defeated by the Marathas

**Bajirao II (1796-1818)**

When Madhavrao II died in 1795, there wag a lot of confusion in Maratha politics There were many intrigues for the appointment of a successor To begin

with, Nana Phadnavis was in favour of making Chimnaji Appa as the Peshwa However, later on he changed his front and began to support Bajirao Ultimately in 1796, Bajirao II became the Peshwa The new Peshwa was the son of Raghunath Rao

Bajirao was a worthless man He was thoroughly unscrupulous He had no training or competence for the high office to which he was called He believed in intrigues Nana Phadnavis who had helped him to come to power was put in jail but later on was restored to his previous position However, the old man died in 1800

It was during his tenure of office that the Maratha War II was fought in the time of Lord Wellesley In 1802, Bajirao II entered into treaty of Bassein with the English East India Company The net result of that was that the Peshwa came under the control of the Company It was later on that he realised that the control exercised by the English Company was too much for him, The result was that he began to make efforts to release himself from the British control This led to his participation in Maratha War III in the time of Lord Hastings Peshwa was defeated by the East India Company In 1818 he surrendered The Peshwaship was abolished by the English Company However, Bajirao was given a pension and he spent the rest of his days in Uttar Pradesh in religious pursuits He died on 28th January 1851

**Mahadji Scindhia (1727-1794)**

It seems desirable to refer to two great personalities of this period Mahadji Scindhia and Nana Phadnavis Both of them were contemporaries and both of them played an important part during the Maratha War I and came into prominence in Maratha politics Nana

Phadnavis controlled the Maratha affairs at Poona and Mahadji busied himself in the north Both of them served the Maratha State faithfully It is pointed out by Sardesai that if Mahadji and Nana Phadnavis had not acted in concert and brought all their resources to bear on the First Maratha War, there would have been an end of the Maratha power

Mahadji and Nana Phadnavis differed from each other in their physical features as in their mental cast "Nana, a Brahman, tall and thin, brownish in complexion with a long oval face, marked with large piercing eyes and a long nose, the other a Kshatriya, of middle stature, dark, thickset, stout and athletic, a typical Maratha soldier of his time While Nanawas by nature strict and serious, regular and hard-working, abstemious irk words and actor, difficult of approach and never given to sport, mirth or company, hardly ever seen to laugh and of an extremely delicate and thin constitution, Mahadji was, on the other hand, of a jovial and merry temperament, ever surrounded by crowd of people, talking, joking, laughing and enjoying company, taking counsel with all, but always so cautious as to set people entirely on a wrong scent, never to let others fathom his real intentions or plans, in fact, an exact antithesis of Nana"

The life of Mahadji was tie long period of strenuous activity, His life can be divided into 4 parts During the first part up to 1761, he was an obscure figure overshadowed by his brilliant brothers from 1761 to 1772, His life was one of apprenticeship in which he acquired the supreme fitness which later on helped him to cooperate with Nana Phadnavis to defeat the English during the Maratha War I During the third part, he gained valuable experience of war and diplomacy on his own initiative which he put it in

actual test later on During the 4th part, he created the kingdom which he left for his children

According to Keene, "Mahadji was easily provoked and not easily appeased If he seldom forgave an injury, he never forgot the benefit If he was severe in punishment, when punishment seemed requisite, he was not implacable or given to cause needless pain, while in conferring rewards, for service rendered, his gratitude admitted neither stint nor oblivion Consequently he was served with fidelity and affection It is impossible to read the memoirs of De Boigne without how great a part of Scindhia's success was due to the admiration inspired his moral character, and the confidence with which his subordinates trusted to his consistency of conduct, good faith and tenacity of purpose He was good humoured, if not exactly good tempered, and his countenance, in spite of an usually dark complexion, was full of amiability and intelligence His correct expression was happily caught by a young Italian artist (Wales) who painted his portrait at Poona shortly before his death His personal habits were simple and abstemious Better educated than was usual among men of his class, he was not only able to read and write but was a good accountant and had a colloquial knowledge of Persian and Urdu He was versed in business and without caring for the details either of war or civil administration, invariably chose good agents, whom he trusted thoroughly, and who repaid him for his confidence The officers whom he employed at Ujjain and Gwalior were not less successful in fighting his battles and managing his affairs He was an Indian ruler of successful capacity in times of exceptional difficulty He was coldly regarded if not positively disliked for his abandonment of old Maratha warfare and favouring Muslims, such as chief adviser

Ranakhan and his religious guide Mansur Shah " The private life of Mahadji was pure and free from blemish, He was free from caste and religious bias He was equally respected by the Muslims and the Hindus He employed Brahmans, the Prabhus, Marathas and Maharas The Saraswat Brahmans attained special distinction in his service as soldiers and diplomats Mahadji was always careful and faithful to the Peshwa family He never tried to assert his independence, It was, unfortunate that Nana Phadnavis was jealous of Mahadji and always tried to keep him away from Poona

Mahadji did not manage his financial affairs properly He borrowed a large amount of money from all sources A lot of money was pocketed by unscrupulous middlemen There was confusion and misappropriation Money was poured into useless channels Lands were deserted and cultivation was stopped at many places Robberies became frequent Life became insecure Mahadji agreed to pay the expenses of the Mughal empire and his armies but he had no money to do so

According to Malleson, "By the death of Mahadji Scindhia, the Marathas lost their ablest warrior, and their most foreseeing statesman In his life he had two main objects, the one to found a kingdom, the other to prepare for the contest for empire with the English In both, it may be said he succeeded The kingdom he founded still lives, and if the army which he formed was annihilated by Lake and Wellesley eight years after, it was because of the loss of his guiding hand Had be lived, Mahadji would have brought under one standard the horsemen and the French contingent of Tipu, the powerful artillery of the Nizam, the whole force of the Rajputs and every spear which Maratha influence could have collected from Poona, from Indore,

from Baroda and from Nagpur Even if the final result might not have been attained, the great problem of contest between a united India and the English would have been fairly fought out As it was, his death settled it Thenceforth the sinister result was only a question of time "

According to J N Sarkar, "Mahadji Scindhia, a heroic personality, dominates the North Indian history of his time like a colossus His resources were defective, his instruments and allies often played him false, many an anxious crisis he had to face Even sympathetic Residents like James Anderson and William Palmer predicted his sure downfall And yet in the end he triumphed over all We see the intense religious feeling, modern nationalists may call it superstition, which formed the essence of ,his being, We see the deep family affection, the habitual meekness of spirit, the respect for venerable persons, which this strong and busy man of action displayed even at the height of his earthly glory

"In establishing Maratha control over the Imperial Government of Delhi and wiping off the disgrace of Panipat, Mahadji Scindhia had to labour alone, nay in the teeth of pinpricks and covert opposition by the Court of Poona The supreme glory of the Regency of the Empire of Delhi that he, gained, with the superlative titles of Wakil-i-Mutlak, Bakhshi-ul-Mamalik, Amir-ul-Umra, Alija, infant of the Throne, was to him but a crown of thorns the Muslim peers and former captains of the decadent Delhi State and their North Indian Hindu underlings, the Rajput vassals and even some British Residents, exalted at each disaster, each rebuff that he met with, and they counted the days of his sure extinction And the Poona Government denied to him money and armed help in his sorest need and even insulted him in public The

Khilats and costly presents that he had won from the Emperor for the Peshwa (in December 1784), were refused and left to rot at Ujjain for years together, as a brand of public humiliation put by his master on the greatest and most successful ' Maratha general then living He was called in the Poona Minister's letters, a cheat, a disloyal servant, a selfish upstart bent on aggrandising himself by robbing his holy Brahman Shrimant of the fabulous wealth of Delhi

"All this Mahadji bore with infinite patience, just as he broke through the successive nets of intrigue woven round him by his foreign enemies and nominal allies He trimphed in the end, but that triumph was clearly purchased at the expense of years of frustration, of swaying fortune and of immense personal suffering He towers over Maratha history in solitary grandeur, a ruler of India without an ally, without a Party He reared a devoted band of his I own 'captains, and he triumphed in the end no doubt and confounded his enemies and candid friends, but after what a tremendous loss of valuable time and avoidable waste of resources If Nana Phadnavis had backed Mahadji at the outset, then the unchallengeable position which the great Scindhia gained for the Maratha race in January 1789, would have been achieved fully four years earlier, and if such an early consummation had, as its natural effect, prolonged Mahadji's life by sparing the needless agonies of the intervening four years' time of struggle and reverses, then the whole course of Maratha history might have become different "

**Nana Phadnavis (1742-1800)**

Nana Phadnavis was born in 1742 and he died at the age of 58 He was thin in body and half fair in complexion He was always serious and was hardly

seen laughing He was very studious and regular in his habits He worked very hard at his desk He attended to all the detailsof the administration He did not like the open methods of Mahadji and always worked in secret He was usually reasonable and fair in dealings He was afraid to commit treachevy or wrong He was strict in punctually carrying on the work However, he did not possess self-sufficiency of Mahadji He took counsel with all separately, but acted according to his own considered judgment He was not at all loved as he was often in danger of assassination On about 20 occasions, he had a miraculous escape from attempts on his life

Nana lacked military leadership and that was a great disadvantage in the rough times in which he lived

Nana did not possess a conciliatory spirit He gradually removed all the members, one by one, of the Bara-Bhai Council and concentrated all power in his own hands If instead of that, Nana had shared powers with others, there would have been better prospects for the future of the Marathas It has been suggested that if Nana Phadnavis had taken into confidence all the Maratha chiefs and pooled together all the resources of the Marathas, the Marathas would not have fallen as they did under Bajirao II

Nana had too much love for power It is suggested that if he had retired from politics in 1795, he would have rendered a great service to the Maratha cause

Another criticism of Nana Phadnavis is that he loved money too much It is estimated that his private property amounted to several lakhs It was with a view to safeguarding his own money that he opposed to the nomination of Bajirao Peshwa at the beginning

According to Sardesai, Nana would have acquired a much higher place in history if he had subordinated his love of power and monetary interest to the service of the nation

Reference may be made to some of the tributes paid to Nana after his death, According to Captain Browning, "Nana is gone and with him the Brahman raj Poona has fallen " According to Palmer, "With Nana has departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government " According to Sir Richard Temple, "Maratha administration lost all vestige of honesty and efficiency by the death of its great Minister " According to Grant Duff, "Nana Phadnavis was certainly a great statesman, His principal defects originated in the want of personal courage and in an ambition not always restrained by principles His life was entirely public In private he was a man of strict veracity, humane, frugal and charitable His whole time was regulated with the strictest order and the business personally transacted by him almost exceeds credibility Nana doubtless shines out as the last genius produced by the Maratha nation "

Maratha Administration underPeshwas, The Maratha administrative system under the Peshwa was a compound of the principles laid down in the books of Hindu polity, arrangements made by Shivaji and his successors and the modifications introduced by the Peshwas themselves

The Peshwas rose to power as the power and prestige of Raja of Satara declined From 1714 onwards, the office of the Peshwa became hereditary in the family of Balaji Vishwanath To begin with, the Peshwa was one of the Astha Pradhan of Shivaji and that was not a hereditary appointment Gradually, the position of the Peshwa became supreme The genius of

Balaji Vishwanath made the office of the Peshwa both supreme and hereditary

Although the Peshwa showed to the Raja of Satara on public occasions the attention due to a ruler, they virtually controlled the whole administration and even usurped the power of the Raja as the religious head of the State However, these powers were not granted to him merely because he was a Brahman The high position of Peshwa was recognised by the Maratha feudal nobility He divided the revenues of each district among several Maratha chiefs This system of, subdivision of revenue gave rise to complications in accounts and the Peshwa and his Brahmin Secretariat took advantage of the same Perpetual feuds and jealousies were also created among the Maratha chiefs

*Hazur Daphtar* The centre of the Maratha administration was the Peshwa Secretariat at Poona and it was known as the Hazur Daphtar It was divided into many departments It dealt with the revenues and expenditure of all the districts, the accounts submitted by the village and district officials, the pay and rights of all grades of public servants and the budgets of civil, military and religious servants The daily register recorded all revenue income, all grants and payments and all payments received from foreign territory These records became valueless in the time of Bajirao II on account of the chaotic state of affairs

*Village* The unit of Peshwa's administrative system was the self-contained and self-supporting village community At the head of each village was a headman called Patel He was not paid by the Government, His post was hereditary and that was the subject of sale and purchase The Patel was helped by

Kulkarni or village clerk and record-keeper who was always a Brahman He was second in importance to the Patel and was paid in the same way as the Patel The communal duties and wants of the village wee performed and supplied by Bara-Baluth or 12 hereditary village servants who received a share of the crops and other requisites They were also helped by other 12 village servants called Bara-Baluth The carpenters, blacksmiths and other village mechanics and artisans gave Begar or forced labour

Mamlatdar was in charge of a division called Sarkar, Suba or Prant He was helped by Kama Vistar who was in charge of a similar area called Pargana The Kama Vistar was subordinate to the Peshwa's Secretariat except in the case of Khandesh, Gujarat and Karnatak Originally, Mamlatdar and Kama Vistar were appointed for short terms, but they got renewals They were responsible for every branch of district administration including agriculture, industries, civil and criminal justice, control of police and investigation of social and religious questions They received the State revenues and fixed the revenues of each village after consultation with the Patel They heard and decided the complaints of village official Under the existing system, there were many opportunities for bad administration In theory, the accounts of Mamlatdars were not passed by the Secretariat at Poona until they tallied with the accounts of the local officers ' In all disputes regarding land, the Deshmukh was expected to produce ancient records with the history of all Inams and grants and the register to transfer of property which he maintained The registers of the Deshmukh were irregularly maintained and were often incomplete These registers were checked by the Mamlatdars, There were in all 9 officers in each district

In order to prevent wholesole misappropriation of public money, the Maratha Government was accustomed to demand from the Mamlatdars and oher officials the payment of a heavy sum (Rasad) on their first appointment to a district The Hazur Daphtar prepared for them estimates of probable income and expenditure of the district In time of Bajirao II, the posts of the Mamlatdars and others were auctioned The clerks and menials were paid for 10 or 11 months in a year because it was thought that every servant got so much leave in a year

*Judicial System* The judicial System was very imperfect There were no rules of procedure and no codified law In several cases, the no main object was to bring about an amicable settlement between the parties Arbitration was considered to be the first step in the disposal of a suit If arbitration failed, the case was transferred for decision to a Panchayat appointed by the Patel in the village and by the leading merchants in urban areas An appeal lay from the decision of the Panchayat to the Mamlatdar who usually upheld the verdict of the Panchayat In spite of its primitive character, the Panchayat was a popular institution If the Panchayat did not decide the case properly, a, retrial took place The peasant obtained fair justice from the village Panchayat However, there was no justice if the big guns were involved in a case

In criminal cases, the procedure of the other courts was repeated However, the Panchayat was less frequently appointed The chief authorities were the Patel in the village, the Mamlatdar in the district, and Sarsubedar in the province and the Peshwa and the Nyayadhish at the headquarters They administered justice according to the popular custom tempered by the notions of the presiding officers No regular form of trial of the accused persons was prescribed Flogging

was frequently inflicted with the object of extorting confession Torture was also allowed After 1761, capital punishment and mutilation of limbs were inflicted upon persons convicted of dacoity and theft murder or treason The usual methods of execution were banging, cutting to pieces with a sword or crushing the skull In the case of Brahmans, they were starved to death or poisoned The ruler alone had the power of life and death False evidence figured in criminal inquiries and the only notice taken of false evidence was a mild reproof from the Nyayadhish The members of the family were taken away from the convict so that they might not be spoiled Prisoners were kept in hill forts and gold often unlocked their gates

*Police system* The method employed was one of setting a thief to catch a thief Every village kept its own watchmen 'who belonged to the degraded Mahar tribe under the direct control of the Patel Watchmen were helped by gangs of hereditary criminal tribesmen Each group was under the control of its own Nayak or headman who was answerable to the Patel for theft or robbery committed in the village The system failed to prevent crimes Umeji Nayak, the famous Ramosi outlaw, committed many crimes against persons and property when he was actually in receipt of a salary from the Bombay Government for performing police duties in the Poona district His methods showed that there was nothing to prevent the village police from committing crimes settling them upon the innocent Even the petty chiefs and the estate-holders plundered the villages of their rivals Whenever the crime was on the increase, Government strengthened the village police with irregular infantry from the neighbouring hill forts and levied a house-tax on the residents of the disturbed area The duty of the irregular infantry was

to support the village police under the Patel and to oppose violence by force of arms It did not include the work of detection of crime

In the time of Bajirao II, the district police system was changed by the appointment of additional police officials whose duty was to discover and seize offenders, In the case of urban areas, magisterial and police powers were given to the Kotwal The latter also regulated prices, took a census of the inhabitants, investigated and decided disputes regarding immovable property, supplied labour to Government, levied fees from the professional duties given to the Nagaraka or police superintendent

*Army* The Maratha army consisted of the mercenary forces of the feudal chiefs and regiments under the control of the Peshwa In the time of Shivaji they were national in character, but later on they assumed a professional character The Marathas were sent to the cavalry and their knowledge of horse-breeding proved very useful The infantry was mostly drawn from Northern India The artillery was manned and commanded by the Portuguese and Indian Christians The military services of the Marathas were secured by the grant of fiefs As the fiefs of the rival chiefs were in the same areas, there was a lot of internal strife and dissensions and that stood in the way of the solidarity of the State

The Maratha Government did practically nothing for the economic improvement and intellectual advancement of the people A large proportion of the revenues of the Government came from robbing the territories of the neighbours The Marathas did not construct works of public utility The only thing they did in the field of education was to give money to the deserving Pandits The Marathas maintained "Jasuds"

(spies) and "Harkaras" (messengers) for political and military performance and not for the convenience of the public

*Sources of revenue* The most important source of revenue was in the form of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi The Chauth was divided into (1) 25 per cent for ruler, (2) 66 per cent for Maratha Sardars and chiefs for the maintenance of troops, (3) 6 per cent for the Pant Sachiv and (4) 3 per cent for other persons according to the pleasure of the ruler Such a division of Chauth continued under the Peshwas

Another important source of revenue was agricultural income from the village belonging to original settlers who acquired the forests and who could not be deprived of their lands The assessment was based on a careful survey Land was divided into three classes, viz , according to the character of the crop, facilities for irrigation and productivity of land The Patel was the only official authority who could speak for the rights of the villagers against the higher authorities The cultivator had practically no hearing

Dr S N Sen has described the system of revenue collection in these words "When the time for collection came, the, Mahar called the rate payers to the village Chawdi where the Patel held his office The Kulkarni of the village, accounts-keeper, was present there with his records to assist the Patel in his work, and so were Potdars The latter assayed and stamped the money when paid, for which the rent-payer got a receipt from the Kulkarni When the collection was over, the money was sent to the Kama visdar with a letter under the charge of the Chaugula, and a similar letter, often a duplicate copy, was sent to the Deshmukh, under the charge of the Mahar The Chaugula got a receipt from the Mamlatdar for the sum paid, which was carefully

preserved in the Kulkarni's bundle of village account Sometimes Shibandi was sent by the officer incharge of the district or Tarf to help the Patel in his work of collection The revenue was generally paid in four instalments and sometimes in three "

Another source of a revenue was the miscellaneous taxes such as tax of one 'year's rent in 10 years on the lands held by the Deshmukh and Deshpande, a tax on land kept for the village Mahars, a tax on lands irrigated by wells, a house-tax levied from everyone except Brahmans and village officers, an annual fee for the testing of weights and measures, a tax on the remarriage of widows, a tax on sheep and she buffaloes, a pasturate fee, a tax on melon cultivation in river beds, succession duty, a duty on the sale of houses, etc When the Maratha Government was in financial difficulty, it did not mind levying on all land-holders Kurja-Patti or Tasti-Patti equal to one year's income of the tax-payer

Customs duties also brought some revenue They were in the form of taxes on trades and professions, taxes on projects and sale and octroi and ferry charges Brahmans were exempted from duty on things imported for their own use They were also exempted from house tax and other small taxes

Another source of income was from the forests Permits were sold for cutting timber Some money was also got from the sale of grass, bamboos, fuel, honey and pastures

The Government also got some money by giving licences to approved goldsmiths for private mints The goldsmiths undertook to maintain a certain standard In spite of this, the goldsmiths turned out spurious, and faulty coins Such a thing happened in 1760 in a certain division On such an occasion, all private mints

were closed and central mint was established which charged a fee of 7 coins for every licence

The administration of justice also brought some money, although the income was not stable A fee of 2501 was charged on money bonds, Succession fee was charged and large sums of money were taken away from persons suspected or found guilty of adultery

No definite estimate of the total revenues of Maratha State can be given The revenue depended upon the robbing expeditions and could not be certain On account of the unsettled condition of the country, the Maratha Government raised large sums of money on the security of its revenue The people were impoverished on account of too much looting The Constitution of the Maratha Government and army was intended more to destroy than to create an Empire

Causes of the Downfall of the Marathas It goes without saying that after the disintegration and fall of the Mughal Empire, power fell into the hands of the Marathas Their empire was vast Their armies were big, The Marathas themselves were great warriors and in fearlessness and bravery they were second to none in the world However, in spite of these qualities, the Marathas failed to hold their own against the British This was due to many causes

(1) It is true that the Maratha Empire was a vast one, but it was not well-knit It was not a unitary State and all power was not in the hands of the Peshwa The Maratha Empire was a confederacy Power was shared by many Maratha chiefs and most important of them were Holkar, Scindhia, Bhonsla and Gaikwad It is true that nominally the Peshwa was the head of the Maratha confederacy but, as a matter of fact, he had no substantial control over the various

Maratha Chiefs Every one of them was independent in his own territory and did whatever he pleased They did not hesitate to intrigue against one another It was not a happy phenomenon to see Holkar, Scindhia or Bhonsla helping another power against one another Evidently, there was no discipline and solidarity among the Marathas They were not brought together even by a national emergency They failed to help one another against their common enemies and the result was that all of them were defeated one by one by the English East India Company

(2) The Marathas did not bother about finance Such a vital department was absolutely ignored The result was that the Marathas were always in need of money This need they tried to satisfy by plundering the country Plundering raids by the Maratha chiefs in search of money were common But such a system can hardly bring any credit to the Government No country can grow under such circumstances Even the people cannot have any devotion or loyalty to such a State The Maratha empire was bound to fall The Marathas could plunder others when their own territory was small, but when their own empire began to grow, they could not adopt the old device of plundering This resulted in shortage of finance The Marathas did not set up an efficient system of administration Nothing was done to safeguard the interests of the people Their rule was positively oppressive

(3) Another cause of Maratha failure was that they gave up their old method of fighting The Marathas were experts in guerilla warfare They were not accustomed to pitched battles However, guerilla tactics were possible only so long as the Marathas had not set up an Empire of their own When they established their own Empire, it became absolutely necessary for them to protect the people from foreign

invasion Consequently, by the force of circumstances, the Marathas were forced to give up their old method of fighting and that brought about their ruin

(4) The Marathas were poor students of geography They did not bother to understand the geography of the country which was indispensable for successful military operations The result was that their lack of knowledge of the geography of the country landed them into difficulties If the Maratha armies were moving to a destination, they might not be knowing that they would have to cross a big river or mountain on the way, Such a handicap was suicidal for successful military operations If such was the condition of the Marathas, the Englishmen knew all about the Maratha territory, This knowledge helped the Englishmen in their military operations

The English Company had enormous resources at its disposal and the Marathas were no match for them The English were also the masters of diplomacy and the Marathas were merely children before them in that difficult art

(6) Another cause of Maratha failure was the neglect of the study of science and of military training and organization Those who conducted the affairs of the Maratha State did not take note of what their European neighbours were doing in India When Bajirao and his brother Chimnaji conquered the Island of Bassein from the Portuguese after a heroic fight they failed to take the logical step of founding a naval arsenal and shipbuilding base as a measure of self-defence The Portuguese had docks and foundries for making guns and experts to work them on scientific lines These could have been continued under Maratha management at Bassein If that had been done, the Peshwas would not have been helpless in naval

matters They would not have been forced to apply to Europeans for the supply of shot, cannon, power, ships, etc The Peshwas and their advisers were intelligent and it is a pity that they utterly neglected the study and development of sciences which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of their organization, artillery and trained infantry and no wonder the Marathas ran away before the European guns It is pointed out that no Maratha leader had the courage to race the British gunmen even if they were very few in number Sardesai points out if the Maratha Government had possessed the necessary foresight and perseverance to organize their fighting on the European lines they would have been able to resist the British advance successfully

Another cause of Maratha failure was the lack of, organization or system in whatever they did There was no unity of command, no distribution work and power, no clear-cut assignment of duties, no methods, no, and no rule Each Maratha chief pulled in his own direction was want of attention to details and prearrangement It is true he Marathas saw the necessity of uniting for a common purpose but no one came forward to do the needful in the matter They never her against a common enemy The result was that they were defeated

(8) It is pointed out that the downfall of the Marathas synchronised with the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century At that time, the position of the Marathas was the weakest and that of the Englishmen was the strongest Between 1794 and 1800, most of the experienced and able persons in the 'Maratha kingdom were removed by the cruel hand of death The old Ram Shastri had already died in November, 1789 Mahadji Scindhia died in February 1794 Hari Pant Phadka died in June 1794 Ahalya Bai

Holkar died in August 1795 Peshwa Mahadeo Rao lost his life in October 1795 by an accidental fall from the balcony of his palace Tukoji Holkar died in August 1797 Parshuram Bhan Patwardban died on 18th September 1799 Nana Phadnavis died on 13th March 1800 Before the Marathas were able to put their house in order, they were called upon to oppose the formidable British power, strong in science, constitution, unity and naval supremacy The supreme power at this time fell into the hands of Bajirao II and Daulatrao Scindhia Their misdeeds brought the Poona court and society to such a moral degradation that no one's life, liberty or honour was safe People even in the distant parts of the country had to suffer terrible misery through misrule, oppression, plunder and devastation The Sardars and Jagirdars, particularly of the southern Maratha country, were so completely alienated that they rushed for escape into the arms of the English Bajirao was unscrupulous and incapable It is true that Yashwantrao Holkar tried his best to remove Bajirao and put in his place his brother Amritrao If he had succeeded in his objective, there would have been no chance for the British to establish their supremacy However, the British did not allow that to be done and the result was that Bajirao II ruined everything Bajirao II did, not trust those who had been brought up under the old regime and selected his advisers from menials, selfish priests or intriguing up-starts like Arajerao Ghatge Persons like Bajirao II surrounded by men of small minds and poor character could not hold their own against eminent personalities on the English side Lord Wellesley and his two brothers Arthur Wellesley and Henry Wellesley were men of extraordinary capacity and talent The same could be said about men like Elphinstone, Sir John Malcolm, Sir Barry Close, Col Collins, Jonathan, Duncan and Sir Thomas Munro Sardesai says that a

nation possessing such able personalities for its agents is bound to win success at any time

(9) Another cause of success of the British was their inquisitive nature and their superior diplomacy During the First Maratha War, the British had full d detailed information in their possession regarding the Maratha Raj, its armies, the comparative worth of the various Jagirdars, their mutual relations and their family disputes The British knew who could be won over and who were loyal to the Peshwa When they started the war, they were prepared for any eventuality Apart from Hornby, Warren Hastings, Mostyn, Anderson, Upton, Malet and Goddard who were actively participating in war, there were other British agents who were obtaining all kinds of information about the Maratha forts and their positions, paths leading to them, the condition of the people, local disputes and political happenings For seven years, Mostyn supplied useful information about Poona to Bombay and Calcutta I Indeed, it can be said that he was the prime agent who provoked the war On the other hand, the Marathas had practically no information about the English They knew practically nothing about England, her resources, her strength in India, etc Even Nana Phadnavis did not at all possess such details We do not know any Hindu who had learned the English language during the Maratha regime and who could talk and correspond freely in that language On the other hand, there were a large number of Englishmen who had learned Indian languages and could freely speak the same It is pointed out that even Nana Phadnavis was ignorant not only of the geography of the outside world but even of India The maps used by him were fantastic, incorrect and useless No wonder the Marathas failed

(10) According to Rajwade, the want of scientific study by the Marathas was the main cause of their failure To quote him, "If any of the Maratha troopers accompanying Peshwa Bajirao II in his fight before the British regiments of General Smith and others during the early months of 1818, were asked why he ran away and what particular fright had seized him, he would have unhesitatingly answered that he was not at all afraid of white bipeds but of the wonderful long range guns which they handled and the superior scientific equipment that they possessed in the art of conducting war" According to Ranade, "If the innovation had been accompanied by the acquisition of the requisite knowledge of military strategy and the scientific processes in the use and manufacture of superior arms, the helplessness which paralyzed the native armies when their European officers left them might have been avoided, but no care seems to have been bestowed in this direction and they were more helpless than ever on the battlefield"

(11) According to Sardesai, the untimely and unexpected deaths of many of its great men at different times were responsible for the failure of the Marathas The untimely death of Shivaji brought the Mughal 'Emperor down upon Maharashtra The untimely death of Bajirao I in 1740 freed the Nizam from extinction and made his dynasty permanent in the Deccan The death of Peshwa Madhavrao let loose the latent dissolving forces upon Maharashtra and hastened its ruin The death of Madhavrao II in 1795 brought to the Maratha leadership the evil genius of Bajirao II According to Elphinstone "It was the good fortune of the British that neither Bajirao nor Scindhia possessed the strength and spirit to stand forth boldly at a critical moment If there was any other more intrepid man occupying the Peshwa's position at the

time, it is not difficult to conceive how the British would have fared The Marathas had at their command ample means of waging a successful war-arms, money, any and ammunition Everything was ready They only lacked a leader Both Bajirao in the south and Daulatrao in the north became traitors to their nation and lost the game "

(12) Another cause of Maratha failure was the narrow conservatism and racial arrogance inherent in the traditional system of caste The Brahman rulers set in motion reactionary forces and revived old customs instead of supporting bold reforms for the regeneration of society Men like Bajirao II cared more for earning religious merit by distributing jobs among the Brahmans than for the security of the State According to Rajwade, "An Englishman is a born political animal possessing the glittering polish of a gentleman, but diabolic, at heart Where politics is concerned, he will not respect even his own father, much less any one else It was no wonder, therefore, that with our high talk of spiritual greatness, we went down in a short moment before the Englishmen "

Khare has given certain reasons for the failure of the Marathas According to him, the Marathas did not possess any national sentiment The internal jealousy and selfish treachery among them triumphed over the public interest While individually the, Marathas were clever and brave, they lacked the corporate spirit so essential for national independence The scientific spirit of inquiry and improvement was entirely absent among them They neglected to develop artillery as the main support of defence The pernicious system of allowing lands in lieu of pay for military, service proved ruinous After the death of Madhavrao I no capable leader appeared in Maharashtra The Marathas as a race lacked the virtue of discipline and

methodical prearrangement The British were past masters in the art of diplomacy and the Marathas could not stand against them

In his despatch dated 17th August 1817, Sir Thomas Munro pointed out some of the defects of the Marathas in these words "When I consider the weakness of the native States and the character of the chiefs under whose sway they now are, I see little chance of a protracted resistance from them They have no force to turn our armies and lengthen out the contest by a predatory invasion of our territories They may run ahead of a few days but will have no time to rest or plunder They will be exhausted and overtaken It is not that they want resources that they have not men and horses, but that there is no one amongst them possessed of those superior talents which are necessary to direct them to advantage "

"There is so little system or subordination in native governments that much more energy is required under them than under the more regular governments of Europe to give full effect to their resources Daulatrao Scindhia was never formidable even in the height of his power The great means which he possessed were lost in his feeble hands The exertions of Holkar against Lord Lake were still weaker than those of Scindhia The power of Holkar's as well as Scindhia's government has so much declined since that time that it is scarcely credible they would venture to oppose us The superiority of our Government is so that the event of any struggle is no longer doubtful "

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# Maharaja Ranjit Singh

The Sikhs who were originally a religious sect were hammered into a military power by their conflict with the Afghans When Ahmed Shah Abdali withdrew in 1767, they occupied the country, between the Jumna and Rawalpindi It is true that for some time that progress was checked by the Marathas, but when the Maratha power was broken by Lord Lake in 1803, the Sikhs began to entertain new hopes of progress and growth in the future

Ranjit Singh was born in 1780 At the age of 19, he helped Zaman Shah, the Afghan ruler of Kabul, in invading the Punjab Out of gratitude, Zaman Shah appointed Ranjit Singh the Governor of Lahore in 1799 He was also given the title of Raja In 1802, he made himself master of Amritsar By and by, he brought tinder his control the Sikh Misls or fraternities west of Sutlej

Ranjit Singh was encouraged by the policy of non-intervention followed by Sir George Barlow (1805-7) He intended to extend his authority over the territory known as the Cis-Sutlej states These Sikh states were formerly tinder Scindhia, but when the latter was turned out from Hindustan, they informally came under British protection In 1806, some Sikhs chiefs of these tales quarrelled among themselves and asked for the intervention of Maharaja Ranjit singh The latter accepted the invitation, crossed the Sutlej and occupied

Ludhiana When this happened, the Sikh Chiefs were alarmed and they appealed to the British Government for protection At that time Lord Minto was the Governor-General and he was determined to keep the power of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to the hue west of the Sutlej The British Government declared that they would not allow Ranjit Singh to establish his control over the Cis-Sutlej states, and there was every possibility of war between the two powers At this time, Ranjit Singh hesitated Negotiations were started and Charles Metcalfe was sent for that purpose After many delays, the Treaty of Amritsar was signed in 1809, This treaty fixed the river Sutlej as the boundary line between Maharaja Ranjit Singh's territory and that of the English Company It established "perpetual amity" between the two powers

If Maharaja Ranjit Singh could not extend his territory in the East, he tried to extend the same in the West In 1810, he led an expedition against Multan which was ultimately annexed in 1818 He got Kangra from the Gurkhas and Attock from the Afghans in 1813 He took advantage of the lawlessness that prevailed in Afghanistan and became independent of that territory In 1814, be gave shelter to Shah Shuja and relieved him of his Koh-i-Noor In 1819, Ranjit Singh conquered Kashmir and in 1823 Peshawar passed into his hands It was formally annexed in 1834 He had his designs on Sindh but could not achieve them on account of the British opposition He died in 1839 at the age of 50

It seems desirable to discuss at length the relations between the English and Maharaja Ranjit Singh from the time of the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar to the death of the Lion of the Punjab It has already been pointed out that one of the effects of the treaty of Amritsar was that the British Government

was able to take the Cis-Sutlej states under its protection Ranjit Singh's advance in the East was checked but he was given a carte blanche so far as the region to the west of the Sutlej was concerned Metcalfe is said to have told Ranjit Singh that in 20 years he would reap the fruits of his alliance with the British In 1827, the Maharaja Wade that "His words have been verified "

Up to 1812, there were Some doubts and suspicions A small fort was at Phillaur near the British frontier and Muhkam Chand was put in charge of it It served as a frontier outpost, a station of defence and a watch-tower Even deserters from the British array were received by Muhkam Chand However, after some time, the relations between Ranjit Singh and the English Company began to improve and continued to be cordial up to 18[illegible]3 During this period the English were busy with the Gurkhas and the Marathas and Ranjit Singh was busy in conquering Multan, Derajat, Kashmir, Peshawar and the hills and plains of the Punjab

There was a change in the British attitude That was due to the fact that Ranjit Singh came to be considered as a rival of the British in India and consequently an attempt was made to check and curb his power There were certain disputes with regard to the indefinite Cis-Sutlej frontier Out of the 47 territories claimed by Ranjit Singh, 12 were disputed In 1827, the British Government decided most of these 12 cases practically in their own favour, The claim of Ranjit Singh to Ferozepur was disallowed although he claimed that the Sikhs of Ferozepur were among the oldest of his subjects The reason for this given was by Murray in these words "The capital Lahore is distant only 40 miles with a single river to cross, fordable for 6 months in the year The post of Ferozepur from

every point of view seems of the highest importance to the British Government whether as a check on the growing ambition Of Lahore or as a post of consequence " Ferozepur was occupied by the British in 1835 and a military cantonment was made in 1838 There ere protests against this but the British Government ignored them

Between 1822 and 1828, British attitude was to watch very carefully the activities of Maharaja Ranjit Singh According to Murray, "The British Government must not lose sight in a moment of repose and tranquillity of one of the principal and original motives of the advance of our troops to the frontier "

In 1815, Pirthi Bilas, the Vakil of the Gurkhas, and Seo Dat Rai, a reliable person of the Raja of Bilaspur, approached Maharaja Ranjit Singh and requested him to help the Gurkhas in their war with the British, to speak to the bankers to lead them 5 lakhs of rupees and to help the Gurkhas to cross the Jumna and the Ganges The Maharaja expressed his inability to help the Gurkhas against the British although he was very unhappy when the Gurkhas were defeated, Likewise he did not respond to the appeal of the ex-Peshwa Baji Rao in 1822 He also ignored the requests of the ex-king of Nagpur in 1820 He did not adopt any hostile attitude towards the English Company when it was busy in the Burmese War In 182526, he did not go to the help of the people of Bharatpur The ruler of Bharatpur offered Rs one lakh for every day's match and Rs 50,000 if he brought 20,000 troops to his assistance

Between 1827-1831, there was an insurrection at Peshawar led by Syed Ahmed against Ranjit Singh It is true that the British Government did not give any help to the Syed either directly or indirectly but

undoubtedly it connived at the help given to the Syed by his own subject

In the case of Sindh, Ranjit Singh wanted to have Shikarpur which was regarded as the gate of Khorasan, and of great importance to the industry of Asia It had a commercial connection with many remote marts ' The possession of Shikarpur could give Ranjit Singh some control over Afghanistan and Baluchistan More than half of the population of Shikarpur was that of the Sikhs and only about one-tenth of the people were Muslims Before taking any action, Maharaja Ranjit Singh sounded the British Government However, the latter was reticent Although Pottinger was negotiating at that time a commercial treaty with the Amla of Sindh, that fact was not mentioned' to Ranjit Singh at the time of his meeting with William Bentinck at Rupar Ranjit Singh did not oppose the British Government on the point of commercial treaty and also did not press his claims on Shikarpur

In 1835, Ranjit Singh once again began to make preparations for the defence of Shikarpur and an attack on Sindh In September 1836, the Maharaja held his Durbar and gave a Khilat to Nao Nihal Singh and directed him to proceed to Multan and from there to Mithankot He was also to inform the rulers of Sindh that if they did not pay the tribute to the Maharaja, Shikarpur would be occupied Hari Singh Nalwa was sent to join the prince, Diwan Sohan Mal, Governor of Multan, also advanced War seemed to be imminent, but Ranjit Singh did not precipitate matters on Account of the stiff attitude of the British Government He was not prepared to give up his British alliance for the sake of Sindh

Ranjit Singh and William Bentinck met at Rupar

So far as the British Government was concerned, its underlying motive for the interview was to give the world an impression that there was complete amity between Ranjit Singh and the British Government in India, Ranjit Singh also wanted to emphasize the fact that he was acknowledged as the head of the Khalsa by the British Government

It is well known that when Burnes was sent to Kabul to negotiate a treaty with Dost Mohammad, the latter expressed his willingness to enter into an alliance on the condition that the 'British Government helped him to get Peshawar from Ranjit Singh, Burnes's view was that if the British Government asked Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the latter would be only too glad to give up Peshawar because that was not a profitable affair In spite of this suggestion, Lord Auckland refused to ask Ranjit Singh to give Peshawar to Dost Mohammad The result was that negotiations with Dost Mohammad fell through and Burnes had to come back empty-handed, Lord Auckland made it dear that he was not prepared to do anything which was likely to create any suspicion in the mind of Ranjit Singh

In 1838, the Tripartite Treaty was signed between Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and the English Company Ranjit Singh at first showed hesitation to enter into this treaty He was an unwilling partner because he felt that he was going to have in Kabul a dependent ally of the British in Shah Shuja but he also knew that he could not improve his position by remaining aloof There was a meeting of Ranjit Singh and Auckland in November 1838 at Ferozepur and Ranjit Singh got an undertaking that the British troops would not pass through the Punjab However, on account of the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, and the disorder and confusion that prevailed in the

Punjab, the British Government was able to take its troops and Gonvoys through the Punjab during the First Afghan War It is pointed out that one of the objects of the Tripartite treaty was to check the power of Ranjit Singh in Sindh One of the articles of the treaty provided that Shah Shuja was to give up his claims of supremacy and arrears of tribute over the Amirs of Sindh and matters were to left to the mediation of the British Government The British Government was preparing the way for the annexation of Sindh

It is pointed out that in the last decade of his carrier, Ranjit Singh did not deal with the British Government in a firm manner Probably that was due to the fact that he felt the English to be too strong for him He feared to expose his kingdom to the risk of war and consequently decided to follow a policy of surrender before the British Government

According to Dr Sinha, a political alliance means a rider and a horse "In this Anglo-Sikh alliance, the British Government was the rider and Ranjit Singh was the horse The English limited Ranjit's power on the East, on the South and would have limited him on the West if that were possible Evidently, a collision between his military monarchy and British imperialism was imminent Ranjit Singh, the Massinissa of British Indian history, hesitated and hesitated forgetting that in politics as in war, time is not on the side of the defensive When the crash came after his death under far less able men, chaos and disorder had already supervened and whatever hope there had been when he was living, there was no more when he was dead In his relations with the British Government, Ranjit Singh is seen at his worst He never grandly dared He was all hesitant and indecision "

*Civil Administration of Ranjit Singh* According to Dr G L Chopra The only administrative plan which could serve as a precedent for the organisation of civil departments was that of the Mughals —(The Punjab as a Sovereign State) There was a dose resemblance between the Mughal system of administration and that of Ranjit Singh In all essential matters there was no departure The Maharaja did not avail himself of European intelligence and experience in civil administration as he did in the case of military organisation A very limited number of Europeans were employed in civil capacity, In 1805, the Maharaja was advised by Holkar to organise a regular treasury, but he did not do so till 1808 on account of his military preoccupation, In 1808, Diwan Bhawani Das was appointed Finance Minister and it is the Diwan who divided the financial transactions of the State among the following Daftars —

(i) *Daftar-i-Abwab-i-Mal* This Department dealt with the accounts of the revenue receipts, and was subdivided into (a) Jama Kharch-i-Taaluqat, and (b) Jama Kharch-i-Sairat The Taaluqat section comprised entries referring to the land revenue, while the Sairat included all other sources of income, the most important being Nazrana, Zabti, Abkari, Wajihati-i-Moqarai and Chaukiyat

*Nazrana* was a tribute paid to the supreme ruler of the state on different occasions under various circumstances by his subjects, specially by prominent vassals and dignitaries Sometimes, it was in the form of fixed annual charge from a subordinate chieftain, Sometimes it was the price paid to the conqueror for the retention of a piece of territory by a defeated prince Zabti formed a source of considerable income to the Sikh ruler, who often punished his delinquent officials with fines or forfeitures of property or both

Besides, in several cases, he withdrew grants of land from the descendants of his deceased Sardars They were sometimes retained by the state while sometimes they were regranted to others in lieu of cash payment

*Abkari* included all charges made on the sale of opium, bhang, spirits and other drugs The income derived from this source was comparatively insignificant

*Wajuhat-i-Moqarari* included both the profits of justice and charges corresponding to the stamp duties of modern times The receipts under this head were collected in different ways, First, certain charges were made for the redress of grievances by means of judicial decisions Fines paid for criminal acts may be put under this head Then there were proceeds from various charges levied on petitions addressed by the people either to the Sikh ruler or to one of his ministers

Lastly, we may include the payments made for the affixation of the Royal seals on all kinds of private contracts

*Chaukiyat* There, was a very comprehensive scale of duties which were levied, under forty-eight different heads, and on most articles of daily consumption No discrimination was made between articles of luxury, and those which formed the necessaries of life Charges were generally made in cash Griffin writes that the mode of collection was extremely vexatious, the country was covered with custom houses at which merchants were treated with insolence and oppression An article paid duty on being taken into a town, a second time on being taken into a shop, and a third time on re-export

*Land Revenue System* In India, land revenue has

*Civil Administration of Ranjit Singh* According to Dr G L Chopra The only administrative plan which could serve as a precedent for the organisation of civil departments was that of the Mughals —(The Punjab as a Sovereign State) There was a dose resemblance between the Mughal system of administration and that of Ranjit Singh In all essential matters there was no departure The Maharaja did not avail himself of European intelligence and experience in civil administration as he did in the case of military organisation A very limited number of Europeans were employed in civil capacity, In 1805, the Maharaja was advised by Holkar to organise a regular treasury, but he did not do so till 1808 on account of his military preoccupation, In 1808, Diwan Bhawani Das was appointed Finance Minister and it is the Diwan who divided the financial transactions of the State among the following Daftars —

(i) *Daftar-i-Abwab-i-Mal* This Department dealt with the accounts of the revenue receipts, and was subdivided into (a) Jama Kharch-i-Taaluqat, and (b) Jama Kharch-i-Sairat The Taaluqat section comprised entries referring to the land revenue, while the Sairat included all other sources of income, the most important being Nazrana, Zabti, Abkari, Wajihati-i-Moqarai and Chaukiyat

*Nazrana* was a tribute paid to the supreme ruler of the state on different occasions under various circumstances by his subjects, specially by prominent vassals and dignitaries Sometimes, it was in the form of fixed annual charge from a subordinate chieftain, Sometimes it was the price paid to the conqueror for the retention of a piece of territory by a defeated prince Zabti formed a source of considerable income to the Sikh ruler, who often punished his delinquent officials with fines or forfeitures of property or both

which had been fully conquered and which were fairly cultivated

On further investigations, we come to the conclusion that the share of the gross produce which belonged to government was never rigidly fixed at one uniform rate It varied from place to place according to the productivity of the crops, the means of irrigation and other facilities of cultivation

In addition to the regular share of the produce the state claimed a member of Abwabs (cesses) These were collected along with the land revenue, of which they formed a fixed proportion The percentage, however, differed, the usual rate varying from 5 per cent to 15 per cent of the revenue

The revenue was collected twice a year, a month or so after the reaping of the two harvests called Rabi and Kharif The chief officer incharge of the collection in a district was the Kardar (collector) and he was assisted by subordinate officials like Muqadams (foremen), Patwaris (revenue assessors) and Kanungos (hereditary registrars) The proceeds of revenue were kept in the district treasury under the control of the Kardar and were either transmitted to Lahore or disposed of according to the wishes of the ruler

(ii) *Daflar-i-Abwab-il-Tahwil* This was the second department and was concerned with the records of accounts of income and expenditure sent by officials The cashiers were called Tahwildars At first, this department dealt with accounts of a varied nature But when 'separate offices of record, income and expenditure were set tip, the work of this office became more limited

(iii) *Daftar-i-Taujhihat* This attended to the accounts of the royal household, such as the expenses

of the Zanana, presents and Khilats, entertainments (if guests, and Tosha-Khana

(iv) *Daflar-i-Mazeajib* In this office were kept the accounts of pay and other emoluments in the various governmental services, such as the army, the civil staff, and the clerical establishment This department was gradually divided into several branches to deal with the ever-increasing volume of work

(v) *Daftar-i-Roznamcha-i-ikharjat* This office was set up to register accounts of daily expenditure tinder various heads Hence it dealt with various items from this standpoint

These Daftars passed through several change, concerning details of Organisation in subsequent years Each of them was subdivided into branches to cope with the administrative developments

*Territorial Divisions and Local Administration* The Punjab was divided into four Subas Lahore, Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar

Each Suba was divided into Parganas, each Pargana into Taluqas and every Taluqar was made of 50 to 100 Mauzas This division followed largely the system of the Mughals, The administration of a Suba was entrusted to a Nazim (Governor) whose duties were analogous to those of the Lieutenant-Governor before the Reforms of 1919 He had under him a number of Kardars There was one Kardar for every Taluqa The Kardars differed in position and importance according to the extent of territory under their charge The Nazim occupied a higher position than that of an average Kardar, but his functions were largely of an appellate character and of a more general nature The Kardar came into immediate contact with the people in their daily activities He was a revenue

collector, a treasurer and an accountant, a judge and a magistrate, an excise and customs officer, and a general supervisor of the people on behalf of the government

*Judicial Arrangements* There were no written laws in existence in the days of Ranjit Singh Judicial decisions were made in accordance with customary principles The procedure was crude and simple and no distinction was made between civil and criminal cases The settlement of disputes rested with the Panchayat This was a body of five men who were the elders of the village The qualification for its membership was the possession of land and a certain amount of local influence and prestige The Panchayat was more like an arbitration court Hence its decisions were revised by the Kardars, whenever they were rejected by either party In towns, justice was administered by the Kardars who also decided the more important cases within their Taluqas In the cities, cases were decided by the Nazims or by more important Kardars and sometimes separate officials were appointed to devote themselves entirely to judicial work They were known as Adaltis (justices) A distinct court was set up at the capital town known as Adalat-i-Ala (exalted) Its functions resembled those of a High Court of present day

Civil cases were of a varied nature First of all, there were cases of betrothals and matrimonial engagements, which were decided by the Panchayats There were breaches of contracts, sales on credit and the like In these decisions, great importance was attached to the sworn testimony of witnesses In such matters, the government of Ranjit Singh levied fees on the successful party Civil suits regarding landed property were decided on evidence obtained from records which were regularly kept in Qazikhanas

As regards crimes, the infliction of capital punishment was reserved to the ruler himself The punishment for murder or other physical injuries was meted out to the offenders more often in the form of fines than bodily chastisement Mutilation was employed in exceptional circumstances On the whole, it may be said that the rigour of punishment depended upon the nature of the crime, the personal disposition of the magistrate and likelihood of his action being reported to the ruler

Though to all intents and purposes Ranjit's judicial system was crude and simple, yet in actual practice it suited to the social and political environments of the people of the Punjab The abuse of authority on the part of local officials was limited by several considerations, Firstly, the term of office of Ranjit Singh's officials depended on good behaviour The consciousness that their dignity, prestige and social status and even their private wealth and property depended solely on the favour of their master, acted as a restraining influence on their arbitrary actions Secondly, the Maharaja's frequent and unexpected tours introduced a real risk of complaints of bribery and corruption reaching his ears Another factor con tributing to the same result was the practice of deputing special justices to tour in different districts for the purpose of hearing complaints and deciding cases of particular importance The greatest merit of the system lay, however, in its simplicity and in the absence of those legal intricacies and technicalities which, if introduced among the Sikh peasantry, would have beset the path of justice with difficulties

Ranjit Singh's Government He established in the Punjab a pure and unmitigated despotism He transformed the whole constitution of the Sikhs from

an irregular commonwealth of a loose federal type into a military monarchy based on personal rule

Under Ranjit Singh's personal despotism, the Punjab was governed in a manner which generally suited the existing state of society Village life throughout was little interfered with Its local affairs were mostly subject to the Panchayats One great secret of the popularity of the Maharaja's rule was that it kept open to the humblest citizen the possibilities of acquiring position and wealth Another great merit of Ranjit's authority was that he never based it upon his own inherent superiority, or any Divine Right Theory of Supremacy He never arrogated to himself, any high-sounding titles, or claimed supernatural powers On the contrary, he always showed that his actions were directed to the glory of the Khalsa Under Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs had achieved brilliant triumphs, city after city had acknowledged their authority, until a large kingdom had been created, whose military resources new commanded awe and reverence alike from the neighbouring States and distant rulers

The despotism of Ranjit Singh may be described as benevolent He was no alien ruler from the point of view of race and religion Under his authority, the economic resources were wholly utilized in the kingdom Through the blessing of his rule, the, people of the Punjab evolved a degree of law and order, and entered upon a period of peace and prosperity which had not been enjoyed for several generations

*Army of Ranjit Singh* There has been considerable confusion among writers about the year in which Ranjit Singh first raised regular units Most of them state that the idea originally struck the prince in 1809 While observing the discipline of Metcalfe's

escort In 1805, Holkar had entered the Punjab and in the course of conversation with Ranjit Singh, he urged upon him the desirability of organising the treasury, constructing defensive fortifications and disciplining forces Ranjit Singh visited Lake's camp in disguise and observed the drill of the Company's troops Yet the greater incentive to reforming activities came from the agreement with Metcalfe This agreement created great anxiety in Ranjit Singh's mind as to the safety of his kingdom Experience led him to decide that the maintenance of a strong standing army was indispensable for triumphs of diplomacy and war

In the Khalsa Darbar, records of the army of Ranjit Singh were divided into two sections—the Fauj-i-Am or the regular army, and the Fauj-i-be-Qawaid or the irregular force

*Fauji-i-Am or Regular Army,* The regular any may be sub-divided, into three parts (a) Infantry, (b) Cavalry, and (c) Artillery

(a) *Infantry* The creation of the infantry was a gradual process which began soon after 1805 and continued throughout Maharaja's reign The Sikhs looked upon service with contempt and refused to join its ranks, But Ranjit Singh persisted in his efforts and ultimately succeeded in overcoming their traditional prejudices The result was visible in 1818, when the inhabitants of the Punjab, both Sikhs and others, began to dominate the service In 1822, the Maharaja employed French officers in his service, Most of them had taken part in the Napoleonic campaigns, and were fully conversant with the latest methods of Western tactics and drill Under the personal supervision of Ranjit Singh, they performed their duties energetically, and in a few years organised and trained an efficient force

The early organisation of the infantry was simple It consisted of a number of Paltans, to each of which two horse-guns were attached on an average, to form them into separate units Each of these was put under a Commandant This organisation was expanded later on as the strength of a battalion increased Later, the Paltan or battalion became a part of a large organisation called a brigade On an average, a brigade contained four battalions of infantry, a small varying strength of cavalry, and a battery of eight to ten horse-guns A company of Beldars was generally attached to it

At the time of Ranjit Singh's death, eight hundred formed the minimum strength of a battalion, which was divided into eight companies each of which in turn was composed of four sections The average strength of a company was one hundred, while a section comprised roughly twenty-five men As regards officers, the Commandant was assisted by an Adjutant and a Major Each company was under a Subedar who was assisted by two Jamedars Each section of a company was commanded by a Hawildar, who also had a Naik for his assistance The officers of the battalions were sons or relatives of Sirdars, or members of the landed gentry When the Sirdar had two or more sons the Maharaja usually took one while young, and trained him for service The noncombatant establishment of each battalion included a Munshi, a Mutassaddi, and a Granthi, in addition to the manual workers, such as Khalasis, Saqqas, Gharyalis, Beldars, Jhanda Bardars, Mistris, Kannas, and Tahilyas

The uniform of the infantry was scarlet There were, however, different coloured facings to distinguish the regiments The trousers were of the blue cotton cloth, and the turbans were of same colour The belts

were of black leather The men were usually armed with sword, musket and bayonet

*Fauj-i-Khas or French Legion* This was the model brigade of the Sikh army It was raised in 1822 by Generals Ventura and Allard Its normal strength was four battalions of infantry, two regiments of cavalry, and one troop of artillery comprising twenty-four guns Special efforts were made in its training, and in point of discipline and equipment, it grew to be the best organised section of regular army The infantry section of the brigade consisted of the Khas battalion, a Gurkha battlion and two more commanded by Deva Singh and Sham Sota The cavalry portion comprised a Khas regiment, and a dragoon regiment The artillery was known as the corps of General Ilahi Baksh

As regards the officers of the Khas brigade, Dr Murray says "To each company in these battalions there is attached one Subedar, one Jamedar, four Hawildars, and four Naiks, and to each battalion one Commandant and one Adjutant

"The Fauj-i-Khas had, as its emblems, the eagle and the tri-colour flag, with an inscription of the Martial Guru Govind Singh embroidered upon it It used French words of command Thus it has been often called the French Brigade or the French Legion"

Captain Wade saw parades of the infantry section of the Fauji-Khas in 1827, five years after it had been constituted, and described his impressions thus "They were all dressed, armed, and equipped like the Raja's other regular battalions but in a neater and superior style It was indeed impossible not to admire the high degree of perfection to which M Ventura had brought his Legion"

(b) *Cavalry* When Ranjit Singh began reforming

his troops after 1805, his idea was to create a disciplined force of all the three branches He accordingly attempted to introduce the European drill among irregular horsemen The proud Ghorcharas regarded the new practices as the tricks of a dancing girl, and refused to abandon their old method of warfare This led to the raising of new recruits, which, coupled with Ranjit's preoccupation in organising the foot service, hindered rapid progress Until the arrival of Allard in 1822, there were only four trained regiments of cavalry in Sikh service The total number of drilled horsemen was one thousand against ten thousand foot After 1822, the progress was rapid In 1829, seven years after Allard's arrival, the strength of the regular horse increased more than four times

A cavalry regiment was, at first, composed of men of different creeds like the Pathans, Rajputs, Dogras, and others Its number varied from one hundred to more than five hundred men Later on, this service became popular among the Sikhs themselves, and the number of regiments increased ' Regiments of large numerical strength were divided into Risalas, the strength of which ranged from one hundred and fifty to two hundred The officers in the cavalry were similar to those as in A infantry battalion, and similar was the arrangement of noncombatants The pay of the cavalry regiment was much higher than in the infantry

The regular horsemen have been described as "mean-looking, illdressed an wrechedly mounted," and their hore trappings as "of the leather of worst quality " In the field, their conduct corresponded with their general appearance

(c) *Artillery* In the beginning two guns were usually attached to each infantry battalion, there being

no distinct detachment of artillery in existence In 1810, however, a separate corps was raised and placed under an officer called Darogha-i-Topkhana Two years later, this corps formed the principal unit of the artillery, and as such was called Topkhana-i-Khas It wits commanded by a Muslim officer, named Mian Ghuas Khan The entire Topkhana wits now divided into four sections, the first comprising Aspi guns, and the second Gavi guns The third consisted of a separate horse battery, while the last comprised a number of guns which were distributed over various battalions of infantry The Ghubaras and Zambyraks were organised into Deras called Dera-i-Zamburkhana, In 1814 a fresh battery was raised, but the separate battery of the earlier period was assigned to the regular army As a result of the reforming efforts of both these officers, General Court and Colonel Gardner, the entire Tophkhana was reorganised It was divided into three sections, (i) Topkhana-i-Jingi, (ii) Topkhana-i-Aspi, (iii) Zamburkhanas The mixed batteries of the firs, were composed of Aspi guns, and Gavi guns and howitzers The Topkhana-i-Khas was amalgamated with other batteries to form one of the three principal sections of the regular army In 1835 when the army was organised into brigades, the artillery branch underwent further modifications

There was a close resemblance between the internal organisation of a battery and a battalion of infantry, the average strength of a ten-gun battery being two hundred and fifty men, including non-combatants Each battery was subdivided into sections, every section comprising two guns and eight to ten gunners The ten-gun battery was officered by a Commandant, assisted by at Adjutant and a Major, while each section was under a Jamedar, with a Hawaildar and a Naik to assist him

The training and organisation of the artillery on European lines was accomplished in less than a decade, General Court, to whom this task was chiefly assigned joined the Sikhs in 1827, and within a few years, he raised the corps to a high pitch of efficiency

*Fauj-i-be-Qawaid or the Irregular Army* It was composed chiefly of horsemen These were divided into two sections—Ghorchara Khas and the Misaldar The former was a single organisation, and was recruited from amongst the yeomen or landed gentry Many members were relatives of the dignitaries of the court They supplied their own equipment, and were regularly paid at first in Jagirs but later on in cash The Misaldars comprised all the petty chiefs who, having been recently dispossessed of their territories by Ranjit Singh, had consented to serve under him at the head of their respective bands of horsemen The latter thus represented all classes of society, and were regarded as inferior in social status to the Khas troops This difference was visible in their horses and equipment The Misaidars grew in numbers, and at the end of the reign, formed by far the greater proportion of the irregular cavalry For administrative purposes, the Ghorcharas were divided into several Deras, each Dera comprising several minor groups of horsemen, which were called Misls The men in a Misl belonged to a single clan Their leader was usually the descendant of one under whom they had originally joined Ranjit Singh's Army These Misls were of varying strength, ranging from twenty-five to seventy-five men In 1822, the Deras were grouped into bigger divisions, each of which was put in charge of a high dignitary of State In these appointments, care was taken to keep these clans intact Lord Auckland saw the Chorcharas during his visit to the Punjab in 1838 and considered them to be "the most picturesque troops in the world "

*Recruitment and Pay* Enlistment in the army was voluntary and recruits could always be found in abundance This was due to several causes In the first place, many of the tribes inhabiting the Punjab possessed martial traditions of a higher order Secondly, a considerable social prestige was attached to the profession of arms Thirdly, Ranjit Singh's personal attitude to the fighting forces secured an abundant supply of men sought military careers

In the days of the Misls, the troops were paid either out of the plunder or by grant of land, usually liable to the payment of revenue The latter system continued under Ranjit Singh It was, however, found unsuitable Tor the needs of a standing army Hence the system of cash payments in the form of monthly salaries was introduced

Though the salaries were fixed at a monthly rate, in practice they were never paid at regular intervals The army remained in arrears on an average from four to six months, and payments were made three or four times a year This was partly due to the inefficiency of the pay department, but to a greater extent to the deliberate police on the part of the Sikh ruler, who thereby checked the insubordination, and desertion of his men, For purposes of distribution of pay, the army was divided into three branches Fauj-i-Sowari, Fauj-i-Am, and Fauj-i-Filajat The irregulars were paid at first by the commanding officer of each unit, and afterwards by a Dewan attached to each division The regulars were always paid through a Bakshi Payments to the third branch were made through Thanedars The paymasters of all three branches submitted an estimate based on the approximate strength of the units under their sway, to the central treasury at the capital

The pay in the regular army of the cavalry was higher than the infantry, but the artillery and the infantry were paid much the same The emoluments of the Chorcharas were still better than those of the regular horsemen, Instead of a regular system of pensions for long service, occasional jagirs and donations of money were bestowed, but no systematic provision was made for the widows or children of those who lost their lives in the field

Personality of Ranjit Singh Ranjit Singh is known as the Lion of the Punjab He was so popular with his subjects that Sir Repel Griffin, who wrote fifty years after the death of the Maharaja, was constrained to remark thus "Although half a century has passed since his death, his name is still a household word in the province, his portrait is still preserved in castle and cottage It is a favourite subject with the ivory painters of Amritsar and Delhi "

As regards the physical features of the Maharaja, he was not handsome at all According to Baron Hugel, "I must call him (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) the most ugly and unexpressing man I saw throughout the Punjab His left eye which is quite closed disfigures him less man the other, which is always rolling about wide open and is much distorted by disease The scars of the small-pox on his face do not run into one another but form so many dark pits in his greyish brown skin, his short straight nose is swollen at the tip, the skinny lips are stretched tight over his teeth which are still good He has a thick muscular neck, thin arms and legs, the left foot and left arm drooping, and small well-formed hands "

According to Griffin, the Maharaja was "the beau ideal of a soldier—strong, spare, active, courageous and enduring " He was excellent as a horseman and a

swordsman He had great capacity for work and he worked from early morning till late in the evening With his indefatigable capacity for work, he could give suggestions and guidance on very minute points He had a wonderful memory According to Jacquemont, "He knew the name, position and history of from ten to twelve thousand villages in his kingdom" He was so inquisitive that he put hundreds of questions to those who came to see him According to Sinha, "His conversation was a nightmare even to a man of the intellectual capacity of Jacquemont" The topics he discussed ranged "front war to wine, and from learning to' hunting with breathless rapidity" He was a great patron of learning He gave rent free lands to the Pathshalas and Madrasas He also gave them monthly grants He patronised scholars like Munshi Sohan Lal, Mian Shah Muhammad, Diwan Amar Nath and Ganesh Dass, Munshi Sohan Lal wrote his famous book known as Umadat-ut-Tawarikh in Persian Amar Nath was the author of Zafar Nama, Ganesh Dass wrote Fateh Nama Guru Khalsa Ji Ka

The Maharaja followed a policy of religious toleration In spite of his love for his own religion, he treated the other religions generously, This is evident from the fact that he employed the Faquir Brothers, the Dogra Rajas, and Brahmin Khushal Singh and Tej Singh According to Griffin, "The tolerance of the Maharaja was due rather to indifference and selfishness than to any enlightened sentiment," but whatever the origin, his liberalism had an excellent effect on his administration

The Maharaja was a great' statesman He cleverly came to the conclusion that it was practically impossible to make any headway against the Englishmen It was with this conviction that he entered into a treaty of Amritsar with the English in

1809 Not only that, he hesitated throughout his long reign from fighting with the English He tried to get as much as he could from the British Government but did not strain the relations to the breaking point

Critics point out to some of his faults He loved opium, wine and dancing girls He bad his weakness for Moran and Gul Begum He was greedy and unscrupulous This is clear from the way he got the Kohi-i-Noor from Shah Shuja

In spite of his shortcomings, be was a great man in many ways He was a born ruler of men In the words of Griffin, "Men obeyed him by instinct and because they had no power to disobey The control which he exercised, even in the closing years of his life over the whole Sikh people, nobles and priests, was the measure of his greatness " Again, "He was great because he possessed in an extraordinary degree the qualities without which the highest success cannot be attained, and the absence of the commonplace virtues which belong to the average citizen, neither diminished nor affected in any way the distinction of his character "

*Estimate of Ranjit Singh* Ranjit Singh was a great warrior and statesman The establishment of authority all over the Punjab, Kashmir and Peshawar is a proof positive of the qualities of head and heart possessed by Ranjit Singh His genius helped him to create a centralised State Although he was supreme, he styled himself as the first servant of the Khalsa He always used the word Sarkar or Khalsaji instead of Maharaja' He collected together generals and administrates and with their help was able to make the Punjab a powerful State His employment of the Muslims and Europeans shows that he bad no religious bias in him Although he was absolutely

illiterate, he possessed a lot of commonsense He was the master of details and no wonder he was able to set up a strong State in the Punjab

According to Cunningham, "Ranjit Singh found the Punjab a waning confederation, a prey to the factions of its chiefs, pressed by the Afghans" and the Marathas, and ready to submit to English supremacy He consolidated the numerous petty States into a kingdom, he wrested from Kabul the fairest of its provinces, and he gave the potent English no cause for interference He found the military array of his country a mass of horsemen, brave indeed but ignorant of war as an art, and he left it mustering fifty thousand disciplined soldiers, fifty thousand well-armed 'yeomanry and Militia, and more than three hundred pieces of cannon for the fiel His rule was founded on the feelings of a people, but it involved the joint action of the necessary principles of military order and territorial extension and when a limit had been set to Sikh dominion, and his own commanding genius was no more the vital spirit of his race began to consume itself in domestic contention "

*Ranjit Singh's Responsibility for Ultimate Decline of Sikh Power* According to Dr G L Chopra, "Ranjit Singh has been field responsible for the ultimate decline of his kingdom It is generally said that he committed the grave blunder of allowing the acquisition of vast territorial power and influence by the Dogra chiefs "This view, on the whole, has a substantial element of truth Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that the Maharaja was blind to the dangers of his policy We have already seen how he whittled down the possession of his Sirdars, even to the point of incurring blame for ingratitude to his servants In the consistent pursuit of such a policy, however, the Maharaja felt a characteristic difficulty of

destroying vested interests, which he himself had once created It is, indeed, very difficult if not almost impossible, for a despot, much of whose power depends on the maintenance of a semi-feudal nobility, to curtail the size of their holdings Thus Ranjit failed to follow consistently the policy of reducing the people of the Punjab to a more or less uniform political level the most glaring example of such a failure was the grant of an extensive and contiguous territory to a single Dogra family"

Dr Chopra also points out that the despotic and personal character of Maharaja's rule was also responsible for the ultimate decline of the Sikh power To quote him, "That he was a 'State in person' is more particularly true of him than of several other despots known to history Hence his death was certain to bring a rapid paralysis of the central authority in the kingdom His court also, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, was composed of diverse elements and conflicting interests, and the harmonious cooperation of its members was only possible under his own unifying authority His ministers were mostly favourites, and adventures, who hid never been allowed to exercise much personal initiative and were always taught to reflect in their actions the sole will of their monarch Consequently, when that monarch died their efforts were directed to individual gain and advantage rather than to collective benefit while the absence of any competent successor revealed the inherent weakness of all States based on personal absolutism"

After pointing out the above two factors, Dr Chopra refers to the threat from the side of the English East India Company and says that the annexation of the Punjab was inevitable as the Company was determined to annex the whole of India

Dr Chopra says that "such subtle and fundamental causes were working against the independence of the Punjab, as the ruler of Sikhs could, not possibly provide against even if he had displayed a better political genius "

The Punjab Politics from 1839 to 1845 After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, the whole of the superstructure raised by him fell to pieces The army became all powerful It made and unmade kings Confusion and disorder reigned everywhere The hostility between the Dogras and the Sindhianwalas added to the confusion For six long years there was absolutely no law and order in the country

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was succeeded by his eldest son known as Kharak Singh Dhian Singh became his Wazir He was opposed by Sher Singh, another son of Ranjit Singh, and Nao Nihal Singh, his own son Chet Singh, a favourite of Kharak Singh, was murdered Kharak Singh died in November 1840 His son Nao Nihal Singh also was killed by a fall of a gateway in the Lahore fort There arose some difficulty with regard to the succession to the throne and ultimately it was decided that Mai Chand Kaur should become the regent for the expected son of Nao Nihal Singh Dhian Singh was to act as Wazir and Sher Singh was to work as Viceroy Sher Singh did not approve of the new arrangement and consequently usurped power in January 1841 and proclaimed himself as Maharaja It was during the reign of Sher Singh that English troops and convoys were allowed to pass through the Punjab an their way to Kabul to participate in the First Afghan War In June 1842, Chand Kaur was murdered In September 1843, Sher Singh was murdered Then came the turn of Dhian Singh who was disposed of similarly, Dhian Singh's son, Hira Singh, made up his mind to have revenge for

the death of his father He put Dalip Singh, a minor, on the throne and himself became the Wazir Rani Jindan, mother of Dalip Singh, became regent Hira Singh was assisted in his work by one Pandit Jalla Throughout this period, it was suspected, that the English had their hand in the anarchy prevailing in the Punjab In December, 1844, Hira Singh was murdered After this, power fell into the hands of Jawahar Singh and Lal Singh, the brother and paramour of Rani Jindan In September, 1845, Jawahar Singh was shot dead and Lal Singh became the Wazir On 11th December 1845, the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej and on 13th December, the war was declared by the British

*First Sikh War (1845-46)* The most important cause of First Sikh War was the problem of the Khalsa army which was facing Lal Singh and Rani Jindan The army had become independent of the civil authority and for six long years had, acted as king-makers This very army was responsible for the conquest of the whole of the Punjab in the time of Ranjit Singh, but after his death there was absolutely no one to control it It is rightly said that fire is a good servant but a bad master Likewise, when the Khalsa army could not be controlled by anybody, it began to kill all those who came in its way The French Generals like Ventura were turned out and the country was helpless before the tyranny of the army Various sections managed to win it over by means of presents and gifts, but there could he no stability under such circumstances

The main problem facing the Punjab was how to deal with the Khalsa army No wonder, both Rani Jindan and Lal Singh felt that the only way to deal with the Khalsa army was to make it fight against the British If it was successful, it would have the whole of

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of the Lahore Durbar, who was crossing the Sutlej on official duty, was made under duress to recross the river and his party was even fired at The insulting and provocative behaviour of the British annoyed the Lahore Durbar

Raja Suchet Singh, the youngest brother of Dhian Singh and Gulab Singh, had secretly deposited at Ferozepore a large quantity of coins and bullions worth about 15 lakhs of rupees After his death, the Lahore Durbar claimed the treasure Legally and morally, the treasure belonged to the Lahore Durbar, but the British Government refused to band over the treasure to the Lahore Durbar

A village named Moron in the Nabha territory had been given by Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1819 The latter gave the same to Sardar Dhanna Singh In 1843, Jaswant Singh's son, Raja Devinder Singh, became displeased with S Dhanna Singh and resumed the gift The soldiers of Joginder Singh even plundered the property of Dhanna Singh That was absolutely illegal and high-handed The gift had been made to Ranjit Singh and not to Dhanna Singh and therefore the Raja of Nabha had no right to resume it The British Government justified the action of the ruler of Nabha in spite of the protests a Lahore Durbar There was a certain island in the river Sutlej near Ferozepore That belonged to the Lahore Durbar but the same was occupied by the British

British Government carried on propaganda against the Lahore Durbar They sent spies and agents provocateurs to the Punjab, British and the press started intensive propaganda in order to prepare the of, India and England for a war between the British Government I Lahore Durbar and to cover their

Dr Chopra says that "such subtle and fundamental causes were working against the independence of the Punjab, as the ruler of Sikhs could, not possibly provide against even if he had displayed a better political genius "

The Punjab Politics from 1839 to 1845 After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, the whole of the superstructure raised by him fell to pieces The army became all powerful It made and unmade kings Confusion and disorder reigned everywhere The hostility between the Dogras and the Sindhianwalas added to the confusion For six long years there was absolutely no law and order in the country

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were so much stunned that they did not know what to do The Sikhs found a leader in Ranjhor Singh and he defeated Sir Henry Smith at Buddiwal on 21st January 1846 Ranjhor Singh not only gave up the pursuit of the enemy but also left Buddiwal and the same was reoccupied by Sir Henry Smith The Sikhs were defeated in the battle of Aliwal and Ranjhor Singh ran away

At this time, Gulab Singh managed to become supreme at Lahore and he started negotiations with the British Government with a view to achieving his own selfish ends It was settled between the parties that the Sikh army should be attacked by the English and when beaten it was ,to be openly disbanded by its own Government The passage of the Sutlej was not to be opposed and the road to the, capital was to be kept open to the victors Foi all this service to the British Government, Gulab Singh was to receive Kashmir It was under these circumstances that the battle of Sabraon was fought Lal Singh also had sent a plan of the Sikh position at Sabraon to the English three days before the battle It was in this atmosphere of treachery and shameful treason that the Sikh soldiers fought against the British Soon after the first attack, Teja Singh ran away and either accidentally or by design sank a boat in the middle of the bridge of communication " The Sikhs were without a leader and no wonder, were defeated The battle of Sabraon has been called the bloodiest battle of the war The whole of the river Sutlej, at that place ran red on account of the blood of the Sikh soldiers After Sabraon, British armies marched on to Lahore and occupied the same on 20th February, 1846 The Treaty of Lahore was signed in March 1846

Lord Hardinge decided not to annex the, Punjab and four reasons have been put forward for the same

warlike preparations A speech of Sir Charles Napier was published in the Delhi Gazette wherein he openly and threateningly stated that the British were going to declare war the Sikhs

Under the circumstances, the war was inevitable and it actually broke out in December, 1844 According to the British, the immediate cause of the war was the crossing of the river Sutlej by the Sikh army on December 11, 1845 However, considering the fact that the' British army had already left Ambala for the Sutlej on December 6, 1845, it cannot be denied that the British wanted only an excuse to start the war It is also to be remembered that when Lord Hardinge declared war against the Lahore Durbar on December 13, 1845, the Lahore army was still encamped on its own territory

The most important battles of the First Sikh War were those of Mudki, Ferozshah, Aliwal and Sabraon The Sikhs were defeated in the battle of Mudki That was partly due to the treachery on the part of Lal Singh who left his followers just at the time when victory was in sight, The Sikhs also committed the folly of not destroying 7,000 British troops under Sir John Little who were absolutely at their mercy

The battle of Ferozshah was fought on 21st December, 1845, The Sikhs put rip a very stiff resistance and the position of the English was really critical, Sir Hugh Gough wrote that "during that night of horrors, we were in a critical and perilous state " This time the treachery of Teja Singh helped the British He ran away front the battlefield leaving the Sikh armies without a commander

For more than a month, there was practical no fighting That was partly due to the fact that the Khalsa army was without a leader and the British

recognised the ruler of the Punjab A British force was to be stationed at Lahore and was to be withdrawn only by the end of the year Henry Lawrence was appointed the British Resident at Lahore

After the Treaty of Lahore, things did not work smoothly in the Punjab Lal Singh and other Sikh leaders were opposed to the handing over of Jammu and Kashmir to Gulab Singh and their territory was given to them only after the intervention of the British troops Rani Jindan and Lal Singh were accused of creating the trouble An enquiry was made into their conduct and they were found guilty Lal Singh was sent to Banaras

In December 1846, another treaty known as the Treaty of Bhairowal was made by the British Government with the Lahore Durbar By this treaty, Council of Regency consisting of 8 pro-British Sikh chiefs was appointed and the council was to act under the advice and guidance of the British Resident A British force was to be maintained at Lahore and the Sikhs were to pay Rs 22 lakhs every year This arrangement Was to continue up to 1854 when Maharaja Dalip Singh was expected to become major By this treaty, the Sikhs became virtually the masters of the Punjab

In 1847 and 1848, many reforms were carried out in the Punjab which 'were against the interests of the Sikh nobility This added to their discontent The disbanded soldiers were naturally discontented because they lost their salaries and other allowances The Sikhs bitterly resented their defent particularly because those were due to treachery on the part of their leaders They also resented the activities of the British agents who were carrying on negotiations with the tribesmen on the frontier They did not approve of

the concessions given to the Muslims in the matter of Azan or call for prayer and cow slaughter Rani Jindan was bitter at the loss of her power and was determined to have her revenge She was accused of conspiracy and sent away to Chunar Her deportation was resented by the Sikhs

*Second Sikh War (1848-9)* There is no doubt that discontentment prevailing in the Punjab would have resulted in a war sooner or later, but the revolt of Mul Rai, Governor of Multan, precipitated matters He was the Governor of Multan since 1844 Previous to that, his farther Sawan Mal was the Governor of Multan Mul Raj was asked by the Lahore Durbar to pay the succession duty of one crore of rupees He expressed his inability and was asked to pay Rs 18 lakhs On account of the intervention of the First Sikh War, Mul Raj was able to postpone the payment, but demand was renewed after the war The sum now demanded was Rs 19 lakhs As the payment was not made by him, he was ordered to pay Rs 20 lakhs and give up one-third of his territory His annual tribute of Rs 12 lakhs was increased to Rs IS lakhs The Lahore Durbar also tried to interfere in the internal affairs of Multan, Mul Raj expressed his desire to resign provided the whole matter was kept a secret and no charges were brought against him and he was asked to render one year's accounts, The British Resident refused to accept these terms and ordered him to resign unconditionally and render accounts for 10 years The demand for 10 years accounts was simply stupid as he had not been the Governor of Multan for more than 4 years 'The British Resident sent Anderson and Agnew with Sardar Khan Singh to take over the administration Mul Rai handed over the Multan fort to them on 19th April 1848 The people of Multan got infuriated at the sight of Englishmen

There was a revolt on 20th April and the two British officers were murdered

The British Government could have taken action at once but they waited for months and during that interval rebellion spread all over the Punjabi Sir Hugh Cough, the Commander-in-Chief, was of the opinion that the heat of the Punjab at the time was not favourable to large scale operations It was decided to have a winter "hunt" after the rains

On 10th October, 1848, Lord Dalhousie declared thus "Unwarranted be precedents, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my word, sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance" On 16th November, Gough crossed the river Ravi and on 22nd November was fought the battle of Ramnagar, In December 1848, the siege of Multan was started and it surrendered in January 1849 On 13th January 1849, was fought the battle of Chillianwala It was a drawn battle In February 1849 was fought the battle of Gujarat which has been called the "battle of guns" The Sikhs were defeated and the war ended on 13th March 1849, on 29th March 1849, the Punjab was annexed Maharaja Dalip Singh was deposed and given a pension Lora Dalhousie rejected the suggestion of administering the Punjab with Dalip Singh on the throne According to him, "By maintaining the pageant of a throne we should leave just enough sovereignty to keep alive among the Sikhs the memory of their nationality and serve as constant nucleus for intrigue" Again, "When I am forcibly convinced that the sovereignty of our State requires us to enforce subjection of the Sikh people, I cannot abandon that necessary measure merely because the effectual subjection of the nation involves in itself 'the deposition of their prince While deeply sensible of the responsibility I have assumed, I have an undoubting

conviction of the expediency of the justice and of the necessity of my act What I have done, I have one with a clear conscience, in the honest belief that it was imperatively demanded of my duty to the State"

The annexation of the Punjab by Lord Dalhousie has been condemned by many writers According to Trotter, the policy of Dalhousie was "unprincipled and unjustifiable" When Diwan Mul Raj and Chatiar Singh revolted, it was the duty of the British Government to suppress them Dalhousie had no business to wait for months to allow the other Sikh elements to revolt It was a dirty plan "deliberately adopted by the Resident and the Governor-General, contrary to the advice of the Council of Regency"

According to Bell, the annexation of the Punjab was "a violent breach of trust" Dalhousie "violated treaties, abused a sacred trust, threw away the grandest opportunity ever offered to the British Government of planting solid and vital reform up to the northern limits of India and by an acquisition as unjust as it was imprudent, weakened our frontier, scattered our military strength and entailed a heavy financial burden upon the Empire That, I believe, will be the verdict of posterity and history upon the transactions which have just passed under our review"

It is pointed out that after the Treaty of Bhairowal of December 1846, the British Government bad become responsible for the administration of the Punjab during the minority of Maharaja Dalip Singh who was a ward of the British Government It was the duty of the Governor-General and the British Resident at Lahore, Sir Frederick Currie, to crush the ' revolts of Diwan Mul Raj ' Chattar Singh and Sher Singh They had no business to delay matters If they failed in their duty, Maharaja Dalip Singh was not to blame,

The latter had absolutely no power in his hands, It was the Khaha army and not the Lahore Government which began the Sikh War and the Khalsa army alone should have been punished after its defeat There was absolutely no justification for dethroning Maharaia Dalip Singh He was absolutely innocent

Some of the British officers were also opposed to the annexation of the Punjab Sir Henry Lawrence was one of them However, be failed to convince Lord Dalhousie Major Edwards was also opposed to annexation To quote him, "It was my own belief at the time that had the Multan rebellion been put down at once, the Sikh insurrection would never have grown out of it, it was a belief shared, moreover, by every political officer in the Punjab, and I for one still think so now " Again, "With respect to the Sardars, I believe them to be heart and soul on our side "

We may conclude by saying that Dalhousie's annexation of the Punjab was based on a policy of expediency and necessity According to Bell, the Second Sikh War could have been avoided To quote him, "I can perceive no advantage, material or moral, that has been gained by any person or class that could not have been more fully and effectually conferred and secured without annexation than with it "

After the annexation of the Punjab in March 1849, the administration of the province was put under the control of a Board of three members Lord Dalhousie was himself to control the whole of it through the d After some time, the Board was disbanded Henry Lawrence was Rajputana as an agent for Governor-General John Lawinted the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab The Punjab to four divisions and each of them was put under a Come divisions were subdivided and put under the control of Deputy Commissioners and

the latter controlled the Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars The Sikh army was completely disarmed and disbanded Arms were taken away, from the people of the Punjab The Jagirs of the Sikh nobles were confiscated A strong police force was raised and put under the supervision of English officers Village watchmen were appointed, The landlords were given police powers to maintain law and order within their localities A frontier force was raised from the tribes The judiciary was reorganised under the supreme control of the judicial Commissioner Under him were the Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Tehsildars, etc A code of law was prepared to give rough and ready justice to the people Roads, bridges and canals were constructed Agriculture was improved Loans were given to the people for the improvement of land

The result of all these reforms was that law and order was established in the Punjab within a short period The people got contented So, great was the measure of their contentment that when after the lapse of eight years, the mutiny broke out in 1857, the Sikhs did not join it On the other hand, the Sikh soldiers went to Delhi to crush the mutiny

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# Lord Dalhousie

Lord Dalhousie was born in 1812 and came to India as Governor-General at the age of 35 He had entered Parliament in 1837 and acted as President of the Board of Trade in the Ministry of Peel He was a great imperialist and did all that he could to add to the British dominion in India He is rightly called the builder of the British Empire in this country Undoubtedly, he was one of the greatest of the Governors-General of India Neither in amoition nor in hard work, could he be defeated by any one His eight years of office are full of important events in every field

He was a great annexationist He annexed territories for the uniformity of administration, consolidation and addition to the resources of the treasury To quote him, No man can deprecate more than I do any extension of the frontiers of our territory which can be avoided or which may not become indispensably necessary for considerations of our own safety, and of the maintenance of tranquillity of our provinces But I cannot conceive it possible for any one to dispute the policy of taking advantage of every just opportunity which presents itself for consolidating the territories which already being to its by taking possession of States which may lapse in the midst of them, for thus getting rid of those petty intervening principalities which may be made a means of

annoyance, but which can never, I venture to thing, be a source of strength for adding to tile resources of the public treasury and for extending the uniform application of our system of Government to those whose best interests we sincerely believe, will be protected thereby

The First Sikh War was fought in the time of Hadinge and the Second War was fought in the time of Lord Dalhousie The real cause was that although the Sikhs were defeated in the First war their power was not crushed and they were determined to have revenge for their previous defeat

Mul Rai, the Governor of Multan, revolted and put to death the English officers who were sent there For many reasons, Lord Dalhousie did not interfere at once He wanted the Lahore Durbar to take action Moreover, he preferred to take action against the rebels after the rainy season Two important battles of the Second Sikh War were those of Chilianwala and Gujarat The first was a drawn battle and the second was decisive The, Sikhs were completely defeated and they laid down their arms The Punjab was annexed in March 1849, Dalip Singh, the Sikh Maharaja, was given a pension The Punjab was put under a Board of three Commissioners However, the Board was abolished later on and Sir John Lawrence was appointed Chief Commissioner It was he who was responsible for the settlement of the province

The real cause of the Second Burmese War was the determination of Dalhousie to exclude all European powers from Burma He could not tolerate the idea of France or any other country capturing any part of Burma, However, he got an excuse to interfere into the affairs of Burma

Under the Treaty of Yandaboo, the English merchants were allowed to settle in Burma and carry on trade As their commercial rights were not defined precisely, each party interpreted them in its own way The English merchants had their grievances but they stuck on to the trade on account of the high profits made by them

The imperialist character of Dalhousie encouraged the English traders to appeal to him for the removal of their grievances They sent him a long petition in which they narrated all the wrongs suffered by them Dalhousie welcomed the petition as God-sent He declared that the Treaty of Yandaboo had been violated and the Burmese Government must pay damage for the wrongs done to the Englishmen Commodore Lambert was sent to Rangoon for this purpose On account of the behaviour of Lambert, the Burmese Government could not satisfy the demands of the Government of India The result was that there was the exchange of guns and the Second Burmese War started Even before the declaration of war, a British force was sent under General Godwin Martaban was taken, Rangoon and Bassein also fell into the bands of the English Later on, Prome was occupied, Thus, the British were able to bring the whole of lower Burma under their control Negotiations were started by no treaty was signed Lord Dalhousie, declared the annexation of Pegu by a Proclamation issued in 1852 According to Arnold, "The Second Burmese War was neither just in its origin nor marked by strict equity in its conduct or issue " Dalhousie's view was that the annexation of Pegu was "unavoidably demanded by sound views of general policy " Again, "Although this conquest be an evil it will not be an evil altogether without mitigation If conquest is contemplated by me now, it is not a

positive good but solely as the least of those evils before us from which we must of necessity select one"

The name of Dalhousie is famous for his application of the Doctrine of Lapse in very many cases However, it is wrong to say that he was the creator of this doctrine The Directors of the English Company had declared in 1834 that permission to adopt on the failure of natural heirs "should be the exception and not the rule, and should never be granted but as a special mark, of favour or approbation" It was declared in 1841 that every effort should be made to abandon "no just and honourable annexation of territory or revenue," The only thing done by Dalhousie was that he employed the Doctrine of Lapse in as many cases as possible The basis of the Doctrine of Lapse was that as the English Company was the paramount power in India, the dependent States could not pass to the adopted son without the sanction of the paramount power and the latter had the right to withhold the sanction

It has been contended that Dalhousie applied the Doctrine of Lapse only to dependent States, However, no precise distinction was drawn between independent, allied, dependent and subordinate States, The omission might have been intentional The result of this was that any State could be annexed by merely stating that it was a dependent State although there was nothing to prove that It is well-known that Dalhousie annexed Karauli on the ground that it was a dependent State He was over-ruled by the Directors on the ground that it was a protected ally and no, a dependent State No wonder, Sir John Strachey came to the conclusion that the distinction between dependent and allied States was mythical

Lord Dalhousie wrote thus on the subject "I take

occasion of recording strong and deliberate opinion that in exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British-Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves, where they arise from the lapse of subordinate States, by the failure of all heirs, of every description whatsoever or from the failure Of natural heirs where the succession can be sustained only by the sanction of the Government being given to tire ceremony of adoption by Hindu law " Lord Dalhousie applied the Doctrine of Lapse in the case of Satara in 1848, Jaitpur and Shambalpur in 1849, Baghat in 1850, Udaipur in 1852, Jhansi in 1853 and Nagpur in 1854

As regards Satara, its Raja died in 1848 without leaving ally natural son However, he adopted a son before his death Dalhousie declared the adoption as invalid because his sanction was not taken The Court of Directors declared that "By the general law and custom of India, a dependent principality like that of Satara cannot pass to an adopted son without the consent of the paramount power, that we ate under no pledge direct or constructive to give such consent, and that the general interest committed to our charge is best consulted by withholding it " According to Arnold, the annexation of Satara was "a rich but not a lawful prize " It is wrong to maintain that the State of Satara was a British creation The English Company entered into a treaty with Satara in 1819 with a view to conciliating the Marathas The treaty was made between the two powers on the basis of equality No amount of quibblings can justify the action of Dalhousie

As regards Nagpur, its Raja died in 1853, He did not adopt any sort before his death However, he had directed his queen to adopt a soil Under the Hindu

law, such aır adoptıon ıs perfectly valıd The Ranı adopted Yaswant Rao However, ınstead of recognısıng Yaswant Rao a,, the adopted sort of Rajah of Nagpur, the Brıtısh Resıdent took possessıon of the terrıtory It was declared that on account of the absence of legal heırs, the State lapsed to the Englısh Company According to Dalhousıe, the case of Nagpur "stands wholly wıthout precedent We have before us no questıon of ınchoate or ıncomplete or ırregular adoptıon, The Rajah has dıed arıd has delıberately abstaıned from adoptıng aır heır Hıs wıdow has adopted no successor, The State of Nagpur conferred by the Brıtısh, Government ın 1818 on the Rajah and hıs heır has reverted to the Brıtısh Government on the death of the ruler wıthout any heır, Justıce and custom and precedent leave the Government wholly unfettered to decıde ıs ıt thınks best Polıcy alone must decıde the questıon " Accordıng to Arnold "The real law by whıch Nagpur was added to the Brıtısh Domınıon was, ıt must be pronounced, the old but not on that account moıe respectable, the law of the strongest "

As regards Jhansı, ıt was gıven by the Peshwa to the Englısh ın 1817 In the same year, Lord Hastıngs put Rao Ramchandra on the throne of Jhansı and by a treaty guaranteed the rıght of successıon ın perpetuıty Rao Ramchandra dıed ın 1835 Hıs adopted son was not recognısed and Raghunath Rao was put on the throne The latter dıed ın 1838 and was succeeded by Gangadhar Rao who also dıed ın 1853 wıthout leavıng any chıld behınd Before hıs death, he adopted Anand Rao as hıs son and requested the Englısh Company to recognıse hım as such Dalhousıe re fused to recognıse hım and annexed the State Ranı Laxmıbaı of Jhansı had her revenge ın the mutıny

*Annexation of Berar* (1853) Dalhousie annexed Berar in 1853 The reason was that the Nizam owed a lot of money to the English Company on account of the charge of the contingent forces As the Nizam had not made payments, the debt reached the figure of £780,000 A new treaty was made with the Nizam by which he gave Berar to the English for the maintenance of the contingent force and the payment of the debts

*Anglo-Oudh Relations* (1765-1856) Before referring to the annexation of Oudh in 1856 by Lord Dalhousie, it is desirable to refer to the relations of the rulers of Oudh with the English Company from 1765 to 1856 It has already been pointed out that the Nawab Wazir of Oudh defeated in 1765 in the battle of Buxar and taken prisoner along with Alam British troops also marched into Lucknow The whole of It was at the mercy of the British troops In spite of this, Lord Clive led to restore to the Nawab of Oudh his conquered territories He made to part with only Kora and Allahabad These districts were given to Shah Alam to maintain his dignity Lord Clive followed a buffer State policy towards Oudh

In 1773, Warren Hastings got back Kora and Allahabad from the Mughal Emperor who had gone over to the side of the Marathas Both these, districts were sold to the Nawab of Oudh for Rs 50 lakhs The Nawab of Oudh got British help in the Rohilla war and annexed Rohilkhand In January 1775, a new treaty was imposed by the anti-Hastings majority in the Council on the new ruler of Oudh The Nawab was forced to give up the sovereignty of Banaras He was also made to agree to the increase of the subsidy to be paid for the British troops It is well-known that Warren Hastings was instrumental in the maltreatment of the Begums of Oudh He has been

rightly condemned for his attitude His conduct was absolutely high-handed

In the time of Cornwallis, the Nawab requested the English Company to relieve him of the expenses of the British troops in Oudh There were two brigades in Oudh at that time One of them was a permanent Brigade of Kanpur and the other was known as the temporary Brigade stationed at Fatehgarh The Nawab appealed again in 17181 and 1784 for the withdrawal of the temporary Brigade Although Cornwallis did not grant the request of the Nawab in full, he reduced the subsidy to, Rs 50 lakhs a year

In 1797, Sir John Shore intervened in a disputed succession in Oudh, He put Sadat Ali on the throne and made a new treaty with him By the new treaty, the English Company became responsible for the defence of Oudh in return for an annual tribute of Rs, 70 lakhs The Allahabad fort was given to the English Company It was also provided that there was to be no increase in the subsidy except in the case of necessity The Governor-General was given the discretion to add to the troops in the case of necessity

When Lord Wellesley came as Governor-General, the condition of Oudh was deplorable Its administration was a byword for inefficiency, corruption and oppression The problem was a complicated one While inefficiency and corruption demanded action, the loyalty of the Nawab to the English Company did not allow the English to intervene effectively, Moreover, the Nawab paid regularly and punctually the instalments of the subsidy Although the amount already paid by the Nawab wag too much for his Paying capacity Lord Wellesley demanded the increase of the British troops in Oudh and also demanded an increase in the

subsidy Lord Wellesley made further demands on the Nawab First of all, the Nawab agreed and then withdrew his consent He even agreed to abdicate on the condition that his son was allowed to succeed him The British Government did not accept his offer British troops were ordered to march into Oudh and the Nawab was ordered to find money for paying them

The real desire of Wellesley was to force upon the Nawab the cession of territory in lieu of revenue payments Consequently, the Nawab was confronted with entirely new demands He was either to cede the whole of his dominions retaining only a nominal sovereignty Or cede as much territory as would yield revenue equal to the subsidy to be paid for Practically, half of the Nawab's dominions were annexed by Wellesley, The treaty was signed in November 1801 and the territory surrendered was Rohilkhand and the Lower Doab

The result of Lord Wellesley's policy was that Oudh was entirely surrounded by British territory except on the north The policy of maintaining Oudh as a buffer State was given up With regard to the territory left in the hands of the Nawab, he was required to act in accordance with the direction of the Company It cannot be denied that the ceded territory was violently and compulsorily snatched away from the Nawab The introduction of additional troops into Oudh was a violation of the existing treaties

"It has been said that the Oudh action, was the most highhanded of all Wellesley's despotic actions He would hardly have denied all this but he would have justified it The tangle of conflicting interests could only be cut by the sword, and he did not bold the sword in vain "

In the time of Lord Hastings, the Nawab of Oudh

paid huge sums of money to the English Company towards the expenses incurred by the English Company in the Gurkha War It was contended that the Nawab should pay because the defeat of the Gurkhas had added to his security As an appreciation of the contribution made by the Nawab, the latter was allowed by the English Company to assume the title of king However, this outraged the Muslim loyalty to the Mughal Emperor Leonard says in Cambridge History of India that "in the Governor-General's opinion this act would benefit the British Government by causing a division between these important leaders of Mohammedan community It also met with approval of all experienced British officials "

William Bentinck tried to fill his empty treasury from Oudh He visited Lucknow and warned the king that "unless his territories were governed upon other principles than those hitherto followed and the prosperity of the people made the principal object of his administration, the precedents afforded by the principalities of Carnatic and Tanjore would be applied to the kingdom of Oudh and the entire management of the country would be assumed by the Company and the king would be transmitted into a State prison "

In the time of Lord Auckland, Nasir-ud-Din died in 1837 under very suspicious circumstances The Dowager Queen put a son on the throne However, the English put Mohammed Ali Shah as its ruler A new treaty was made with Mohammed Ali Shah in 1837 by which the English Company got the right of assuming the management of the Company in the case of gross misrule He also agreed to pay Rs 16 lakhs for the maintenance of an auxiliary force This treaty was disallowed by the Directors of the English Company and the Governor-General was directed to inform the ruler of Oudh accordingly Unfortunately, Lord

Auckland not communicate this fact to the ruler of Oudh The latter was merely informed that he would not have to pay for the auxiliary force It was an act of treachery on the part of a Governor-General and he should not have gone so low in his action The result was that the King of Oudh hers remained under the impression that the Treaty of 1837 was in force This Treaty was included in Government publications and was referred to by Sir John Lawrence in 1844 Lord Hardinge also referred to the Treaty of 1837

Lord Dalhousie was determined to deal with Oudh in a very effective manner The Government of Oudh was rotten land openly so The would have been annexed long ago but for the consistent loyalty king

In 1848 Sleeman was sent to Lucknow by Dalhousie as a Resident the reconstruction of an oppressed country In 1849, he to make a tour and report on the conditions prevailing in country Sleeman reported that the people killed their female children and buried them alive Lucknow was in perpetual turmoil of processions, illuminations and festivities The only companions of the king were fiddlers and buffoons The ambition of the king was limited to the reputation of being known as the best drum-beater, dancer and poet of the day Most of his associates were outcastes from the low classes The king was always in need of money and used the military aid to squeeze as much as he could The peasantry grew swift-footed The governing classes had no sympathy for the subjects and the latter suffered terribly under the tyranny of the officials The officials took delight in plundering the peasants

Although the condition of Oudh was far from satisfactory Sleeman was opposed to the annexation of the country His view was that "the annexation of

Oudh would cost the British power more than the value of such kingdom and would inevitably lead to a mutiny of the sepoys " Moreover, the native States were 'the breakwaters, and when they are all swept away, we shall be left to the mercy of our native army which may not be always sufficiently under control " Sleeman stressed the educational value of the native States in so far as they afforded an opportunity to those Indians "whose habits unfitted them to become humbler and accept low jobs and swagger with their sword and matchlock in the States " In 1851, Lord Dalhousie himself jouneyed on the borders of Oudh and he tells us that he heard the use of heavy cannon for the purpose of collecting revenues by the servants of the king In spite of this, Dalhousie hesitated to take action

In 1854, Sleeman was replaced by Outram as, Resident The new Resident reported that the administration of the country was an orgy of massacre and corruption set to music

Lord Dalhousie's recommendation was that while the King of Oudh be allowed to retain his title, the entire administration of the country be vested in the Company in perpetuity On account of the Consistent loyalty of the King, Dalhousie did not recommend his forcible abdication and annexation of his territory The members of the Executive Council of Lord Dalhousie were divided with regard to the future of the Oudh The majority was opposed to Dalhousie's views In January 1856, Dalhousie got the orders of the Directors with regard to the future of Oudh He was to offer to the King a kind of Vatican sovereignty, the title of king, adequate funds and full jurisdiction short of death over Lucknow palace parks, Outram was sent back to Lucknow and a brigade followed him The king refused to accept the new position and was deposed

He was sent to Calcutta In justification of the act, Lord Dalhousie wrote thus "The British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man if it were any longer to aid in sustaining by its countenance an administration fraught with suffering to millions " The Indians do not seem to have cared for the material gains which followed in the wake of the annexation of Oudh They preferred their own misrule to the strict rule of the British with the insolence of the Chaprasis and other petty officials

The annexation of Oudh created a feeling of awe and despair in the minds of the rulers of the Indian States They began to fear their safety Sleeman's opinion was that annexation of Oudh was a political blunder According to him, the English used their giant's strength like a giant and injured their reputation in the eyes of the Indians During the mutiny the sepoys of Oudh brought about havoc and added to the difficulties d the British It has rightly been maintained that the forced abdication of Wajid Ali Shah and the annexation of Oudh were offences against good faith and public conscience

**Wajid Ali Shah (1822-1857)**

The character of Wajid Ali Shah, the last ruler of Oudh, demands a detailed treatment He was born in 1822 and he ascended the throne in 1847 at the age of 25 He was jolly and good-natured and the gayest of the gay rulers He studied Persian, rode horses, shot tigers, started loving at art early age and also composed love poems in Urdu All efforts to train him as a ruler failed

He was a man of high tastes He loved architecture He had a flair for landscape gardening Under his inspiration, the Nuzurbagh garden was constructed with canals oil two sides front which

fountains played He planned and supervised the construction of three palaces, one for summer, one for winter and one for the rainy season However, the Supreme passion of his life was *Ishq* or love He surrounded himself with Paris or fairies and put them all in a special palace called Parikhana They were handsomely paid and richly dressed and they were his special Property He sang and danced with them He held inquiries into their petty thefts He watched over their loyalty and turned out anyone whom he did not like The Parikhana was guarded by a hand of women who were trained to carry out his commands Ishqnama or the diary of Wajid Ali begins thus "The Lord of the world has bestowed the taste of love on every human being, and everyone has had his growth in the ever-blooming garden of love, Hence, I too have been nourished with the spring and flowers of love And as I got this woe of love from the very beginning, I have noted down my own tale of romance and love from the beginning up to the present time'

From the time of his succession to the throne, Wajid Ali Shah did not show any interest in the administration of his territory He was raw, impulsive and irresponsible He did things in a hurry and later on repented for having done so There are many interesting stories about the follies of the rider It is stated that once upon a time, a complaint was made to him that a particular Jain jeweller had sacrificed a Brahmin boy while building a temple of Parsnath Without making any enquiry, the was demolished There were protests and ultimately Wajid Ali shah admitted that he had absolutely no administrative experience and that was why the mistake had been made The house of the officer who was responsible trouble was pulled down It is also stated that once upon a time when his Chief Minister was going to see

him, he was caught by four ruffians and he was not let off till they were paid Rs 50,000 as ransom

Wajid Ali Shah had a command of the Persian language and he was also a master of Urdu He wrote over 100 books in those languages His poems fill several big volumes He was an expert in music He was the greatest patron of Indian music and dance of his time Music and dance were the breath of the Parikhana and its master was the patron of the well-known Lucknow Thumri Wajid Ali was also fond of drama His troupe consisted of 361 persons, out of which 84 were women Their total salary amounted to Rs 11,859 per month

Wajid Ali was the father of modern Urdu stage, Amanat, the well-known Urdu poet of Lucknow, wrote his famous Inder Sabha under his patronage

As the administration of Oudh was not efficient Lord Dalhousie gave Wajid Ali Shah a warning The king was so much affected that he left the whole administration in the hands of the Resident and himself joined the company of poets, eunuchs, musicians and dances His companions took the law into their own hands They robbed the people of their money and set free their friends from jails When the Resident gave him a warning, Wajid Ali entered into an agreement by which it was agreed that "eunuchs, singers, and other improper persons should not be employed either directly or indirectly, nor would they interfere with the matters of administration '

Wajid Ali Shah was surrounded by gay persons His ministers lacked ability and character The officials were corrupt and quarrelsome The landed aristocracy had no respect for the court The Resident wanted In efficient government but nobody knew what efficiency was

In Ayodhya, there was a shrine of Hanuman called Hanumangarhi This shrine was under the shrine of Bairagis Some Muslims forcibly entered the shrine and offered prayers English troops intervened to stop the trouble which was taking the shape of a Jehad

By the end of 1855, the administration of Oudh had completely collapsed, but Wajid Ali Shah continued to play Krishna to his Paris The peasantry groaned The communal situation was unsatisfactory The patience of the Governor-General was exhausted On 23rd January, 1856 General Outram was directed by the Governor-General to take over Oudh The Resident was ordered to get a treaty signed from Wajid Ali Shah and if the latter refused to do so, the Resident was to take over the administration On 30th January 1856, the Resident conveyed his directions to the Minister The king expressed his desire to discuss the matter with the Resident The Resident declined to do so but conveyed his instructions to the mother of the king

On 4th February 1856, when General Outram went to see Wajid Ali, he found the palace deserted and surrounded by gloom The guards had laid aside their arms and removed their turbans The artillery had been dismantled When Outram presented the letter of the Governor-General to Wajid Ali, his innocent question was "What wrong have I committed?" The Resident assured the king that the Government had provided for his maintenance, honour and dignity The king read the treaty and asked "Who am I now? Treaties are necessary only between equals Who am I now that the British Government should enter into a treaty with me? The kingdom is the creation of the British They have to issue the commands to ensure their fulfilment " And then he

added, "I am not in a position to sign the treaty I would not even ask for maintenance Let me go straight to England and throw myself at the feet of the British throne for mercy"

On 5th February, 1856, Wajid Ali Shah discharged an his troops On 7th February 1856, he finally refused, to sign the treaty and consequently the Resident took over the administration of Oudh as Chief Commissioner

When Wajid Ali Shah left Lucknow, thousands of persons accompanied him In spite of all his failings, he was loved by the people of Lucknow The parting scenes were pathetic Every one shed tears It was thus that Wajid Ali Shah disappeared from the scene He died on September 1, 1857 One may feel pity for him but probably he got what he richly deserved

*Abolition of titles and pensions* Dalhousie was not content with the annexation of territories He also tried to abolish titles and pensions The first victim of his policy was Dhondu Pant or Nana Sahib who was the adopted son of Peshwa Baji Rao II Baji Rao had been given a pension of Rs 8 lakhs a year He adopted Nana Sahib as his son and asked for the recognition of the Company Baji Rao died in 1852 and Lord Dalhousie rejected the claim of Nana Sahib According to Sir John Kaye, the action of Dalhousie was harsh Arnold described it as grasping

In 1855 the Nawab of Carnatic died without leaving any male issue Azimjah was the heir and fie applied to the Madras Government for recognition The view of the Governor was that the title and pension were personal and the semblance of royalty without power is mokery of authority which must be pernicious—that it is impolitic and unwise to allow pageant to continue which, though it has been

politically harmless, may at any time become a nucleus for sedition and agitation" Lord Dalhousie endorsed the views of the Madras Governor in these words "I entirely agree with Lord Harris in holding that the treaty of 1801 confers no right of hereditary succession It is purely a personal treaty There is no mention of heirs and successors in any part of the treaty and no grant of anything is made by it of any one except to the Nawab Azim-ud-Dowla himself"

The *Raja of Tanjore* died in 1855 and left a widow and two daughters He was a king without a kingdom and enjoyed a pension and some jagirs Consequently, on the death of the Rajah, Dalhousie stopped the pension and confiscated the jagirs The case went to the Privy Council and was decreed in favour of the Company Lord Kingsdown, made the following observations in his judgment "It is extremely difficult to discover in these papers any grant of legal right on the part of the East India Company into the possession of this Raja, or of any part of the property of the Raja on his death The Raja was an independent sovereign of territories undoubtedly minute and bound by treaties to a powerful neighbour, which left his practically little power of free action, but we did not hold his territory such as it was, as chief of the British Crown, or of the East India Company, nor does there appear to have been any pretence for claiming it on the death of the Rajah without a son, by any legal title, either as an escheat or as Bona Vacantia"

*Administrative Reforms of Dalhousie* Lord Dalhousie carried out many reforms in various fields The keynotes of his reforms was centralisation The object of the reforms was to gather all the threads of power into his own hands Dalhousie organised the non-regulation system to meet the new needs of the Indian Empire Under this system, the administration

was In be carried on by a Commissioner who was to be responsible directly to the Governor-General-in-Council Its chief merit was economy of personnel It did not make any distinction between civil and military government The District Magistrate was given all the powers in various effect of this system was that it demoralised the people

Lord Dalhousie carried out a large number of reforms in the military field He started the general movement of troops from Bengal towards the west The headquarters of the Bengal artillery were shifted from Calcutta to Meerut The Army Headquarters were gradually shifted to Simla He also started the policy of reduction, disintegration and distribution He encouraged the enlistment of Gurkha regiments in the Indian army He raised a new irregular force in the Punjab He asked the home authorities to increase the, number of British troops in India so that there might be no possibility of revolt by the Indian troops Dalhousie was always afraid of a conspiracy among the Indian troops

These two departments got a great impetus from Dalhousie Their development was considered to be necessary from the point of view of the defence of the Indian empire and also for the encouragement of British investments in India He entered into contracts with English corporations for the construction of railways All kinds of facilities were given to them for construction work They were also guaranteed interest by the government irrespective of the profits A few strategic lines were constructed at an enormous cost to the Indian revenues, but this helped the English capitalists to make huge profits Telegraph wire linked up the various parts of India and this fact helped the English a great deal during the mutiny

*Commercial Reforms* In the interests of the British traders and manufacturers, Lord Dalhousie followed the policy of free trade All ports of India were declared free, Improvements were made in lighthouses and harbours All hindrances in the way of the flow of goods and capital were removed All the coastal trade of India fell into the hands of English capitalists This led to the economic exploitation of the country

Before Dalhousie, the Military Member was in charge of the Public Works Department The work oil the Civil side was neglected Consequently, Lord Dalhousie appointed a commission in every Presidency to report on the state of affairs The result was that public works were withdrawn from the control of the military A separate Public Works Department was started in every Presidency and its important officers were the Chief Engineer and Executive Officers They were all imported from England The recognised Department of Public works took up the task of constructing roads, canals and bridges

*Postal System* Dalhousie also removed the defects in the postal system He reorganised the system on the recommendations of a commission He started a uniform rate of half anna for letters nor exceeding half a tola in weight for the whole of India, The sender of the letter was to pay the charges in the form of stamps Dalhousie's reforms removed corruption from Postal Department

Sir Charles Wood, President of Board of Control, sent his famous dispatch on education According to this dispatch, education was entitled to the first claim of the government At the apex of the educational structure were to be universities on the model of the London University in the Presidencies These universities were to be merely examining bodies and

not teaching institutions Colleges were to be affiliated to the universities and were to provide education for intermediate and degree classes There were also to be high schools and Anglo-vernacular schools Their medium of instruction was to be the vernacular of the province Private enterprise in the field of education was to be encouraged by the Government There Was to be a Director-General of Education for the whole of India Education was to be entirely secular Universities were established in 1857 in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras

Dalhousie left India in 1856 and the mutiny broke out in 1857 Naturally, the critics attributed the mutiny to the acts of omission and commission of Lord Dalhousie It was stated that Lord Dalhousie was in a hurry to annex States to the Indian Empire He should have been more considerate towards the sentiments of the Indians It is true that the various annexations and conquests brought more money into the coffers of the English Company, but it cannot be denied that they created the unfortunate impression that the territory of no Indian prince was safe It was feared that the unscrupulous Government of the Company was ready to find out an excuse for whatever it did The people lost faith in the sense of justice of the English The application of the Doctrine of Lapse made matters worse It created a large number of discontented persons who were ready to avail of any opportunity to hit back against the English Company No wonder, Rani Jhansi brought about havoc Likewise, the refusal to pay the pension to Nana Sahib turned him into a bitter enemy The abolition of pensions of the Raja of Tanjore and the Nawab of Carnatic was unfortunate It was during his time that a very large number of British troops were sent to fight in the Crimean War The proportion of the

British troops as compared with the Indian troops became very low, Lord Dalhousie asked the Home Government to fill in the gap, but the same was not done in spite of many reminders The result was that when the mutiny broke out the Indian soldiers found themselves in a very advantageous position on account of the shortage of British troops in India, However, for this not Dalhousie but the Home Government was to blame

Dalhousie himself was not in favour of the annexation of Oudh He was overruled by the Directors in this matter and it is they who should share the blame for its annexation

Dalhousie carried out his reforms with the best of motives but every move of his was suspected It was feared that every effort was being made by the Indian Government to convert the people to Christianity or otherwise to injure their sentiments

On the whole, we may say that Lord Dalhousie was partly responsible for the mutiny of 1857 His policy towards the Indian States created a sense of despair among the Indian Princes and that led to revolt He should have tried to carry his people with him and also avoid all those measures which could in any way create misunderstanding and suspicion in the minds of the innocent Indians

Dalhousie suffered throughout his Indian career from art ill-health that, was partly responsible for his fretfulness and which also made his manifold exertions truly heroic He wrote in July 1849 that he was broken in health when he started from England and he landed in Calcutta an invalid and almost a cripple As time passed Dalhousie strained himself under the stress of circumstances, he became a prey to a lamentable combination of maladies He practically lost his voice

He became lame in the right leg and thus developed inside an open and incurable sore of the shinbone There were frequent attacks in the head and many other subsidiary ailments Dr Alexander Grant who was the surgeon of Dalhousie in India has written faithful account of the sufferings and ailments of Dalhousie On every day of the eight years which, he spent in India, the life-blood of Dalhousie drop being drained away

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